



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

Residents Speed up Drive For Stop Signs

By Kathy Dalle-Molle

After witnessing several auto accidents and lots of near misses involving cars and pedestrians, a group of Noe Valley merchants and neighbors have proclaimed, "Enough." They are trying to put a stop to the traffic mayhem, and believe the addition of four-way stop signs at particularly treacherous intersections will help.

"Traffic has really changed in Noe Valley and throughout the city over the last five years," says Alexander Gardener, owner of Video Wave since 1989. "It's much racier, people are less courteous, and because of that we need more controls. Nowadays, it seems that drivers won't stop out of caution, but only when they are forced to."

In early November, Gardener posted a sign on the front door of his Castro Street shop announcing the formation of the Noe Valley Stop Sign Committee. Gardener is organizing the group, which he hopes will "work to help get stop signs up, to make Noe Valley a safer neighborhood for all."

The committee's first targets are the intersections of Church and 25th, Castro and 26th, and Church and Jersey, but Gardener encourages people to stop by Video Wave to let him know of other hazardous intersections.

"The purpose of the committee is to avoid having each neighborhood block go through the process with city government to get a stop sign," he says. "We hope by working together as a group representing the entire community that we can get these signs up quickly and with minimal effort."

Gardener, along with Mitchell Schoenbrun, who lives a couple of doors down from Video Wave, were instrumental in



A homemade stop sign put up at the corner of Church and 25th streets in November may not be as effective as the newly installed city version at Castro and Jersey streets. The latter was the result of some intensive lobbying by neighbors and merchants. Photo by Pamela Gerard

getting the Department of Parking and Traffic (DPT) to install stop signs on Castro Street at Jersey in mid-October, making that corner a four-way stop.

Although neighbors had begged for a four-way stop at that intersection for close to a decade, until now no one had had much luck in persuading DPT of the severity of the problem.

In fact, as recently as July 20, Gardener received a letter from city traffic engineer Bond Yee, informing him that after conducting an investigation of the corner, including sight distances, car and pedestrian volume, and accident history, "we do not recommend installing additional signs to stop Castro Street."

Yee also cited the 24-Divisadero bus line as a factor. "An additional stop sign would impede Muni service," he wrote. "While the effect of one additional stop sign may have only a small impact, the cumulative effect of additional stop signs at other intersections can degrade Muni service. The city's Transit First policy requires that we pay particular attention to Muni's service requirements, especially when an

intersection operates relatively safely."

Two days after Gardener received the letter, on July 22, a two-car collision occurred at the intersection. Both cars were totaled. A week later, on July 29, another accident occurred, and again the cars

Continued on Page 5

Deadline in the Red Zone

It's third and short in the last minutes of the fourth quarter, and we're going for it. This is our last issue to carry the date of 2000, and if we score, that'll make us 10-0.

Want to help us finance next year's team? We won't get much help in the draft, but if you can place your display ad orders with Steve (239-1114) by Jan. 19, he'll get you suited up for the next issue, due on the field Feb. 2. The Class Ads booster club wants your copy by Jan. 15. Same date applies for applicants to the Calendar pep squad. Mail items to the Noe Valley Voice at 1021 Sanchez St., S.F. 94114. We're out of here for the month of December. See ya!

Sally Smith and Jack Tipple
QB, WR, Noe Valley Voice ©2000

December Is Nail-Biting Time For Preschool Parents

By Heidi Anderson

For many parents, December can be an anxious month. And it's not just because they can't afford a Poo-chi robot dog. These parents are occupied with the task of finding a school for their child.

They must weigh what schools in San Francisco have to offer and make a decision. For parents who live in Noe Valley and want the cozy feel of a neighborhood school, this means choosing from among two Catholic and four public schools, and several private schools as well.

Deadlines for applications for both the parochial and public schools in Noe Valley are about the same. For Fall 2001 enrollment, applications must be received at the end of January for parochial school. At press time, the San Francisco Unified School District had not issued its deadline, but it will most likely be the end of January as well. In January the process of looking, finding, and deciding on the best school for one's almost 5-year-old reaches a fevered pitch.

It's a job most parents do not enjoy.

Fear and Loathing on the School Trail

"What I hear about public schools is not encouraging," says Min Wolf, a San Jose Avenue resident whose 5-year-old attends the Tiny Tots preschool program at Upper Noe Recreation Center.

Until recently, Wolf's child went to St. Paul's Parish Preschool on Valley Street. She now plans to apply to St. Paul's for her child's kindergarten education because she has a priority standing to be accepted. However, she still might consider

Continued on Page 7



It's a steep climb up 28th Street, but worth the effort to be able to view the nighttime landscape of Hollyrock, Donnie Tinsley's annual holiday creation. Photo courtesy of Donnie Tinsley

Hollyrock Brings Tinseltown to 28th Street

By Olivia Boler

If you've ever strolled around the hills of Noe Valley, you may have run across a rather curious house on 28th Street between Diamond and Castro. Of course, there are many interesting homes in Noe Valley, but none are quite as unusual as Hollyrock, particularly around the holidays.

Every December for the past 19 years, Donnie Tinsley, who lives in the 500 block of 28th Street, has transformed his steeply hilled front yard into a winter wonderland. Santa Claus and a reindeer-powered sleigh grace the balcony. Lights of every color and shape run over the eaves, down the front staircase, and into the plants and trees. Elves peek out from behind the aloe vera. Giant candy canes grow out of the ground as if a child's sugarplum dreams had come true. Penguins inhabit an igloo near the base of the stairs gazing up at the

ever-present white letters *HOLLY ROCK*, which remind one of that Tinseltown icon in Los Angeles, *HOLLYWOOD*.

It all started in 1981, when Tinsley was asked to organize designer Vidal Sassoon's Christmas party. Tinsley had moved to San Francisco from Atlanta in 1978. In 1979, he found his dream house on 28th Street and moved in.

"I'd always thrown small parties at Christmas," Tinsley says. "Vidal Sassoon and I had mutual friends, and they couldn't find a venue for his party. So, I thought, why not have it here?"

Tinsley knew Sassoon had some friends who might get a little wild, so he made the party very formal. Renting glassware and a dance floor, which he put in the dining area, Tinsley made the theme of the party "Black and White." A tree flocked in black ribbons, blue glitter, white pearls, and clear glass balls dominated the living room. "People were dressed to the nines," says Tinsley. "They were on their best behavior."

From then on, Tinsley's Christmas party became the highlight of the holiday

Continued on Page 9



Aren't We Lovely? This group of Sanchez Street homes could be featured on our own San Francisco postcard.

Photo by Pamela Gerard



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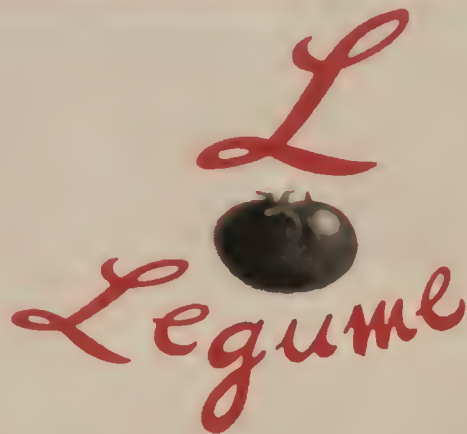
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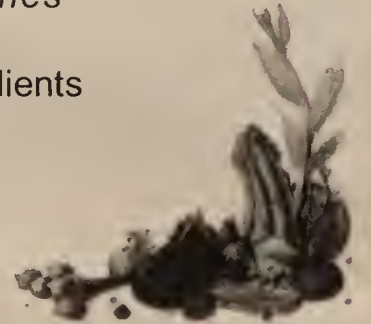
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Call for Stop Signs At Three Dangerous Intersections

Continued from Page 1

were totaled.

By then, Gardener had had it. "I witnessed two accidents in one week and the Department of Parking and Traffic was telling me that there was a good safety record for the intersection."

So in early August, he called Supervisor Mark Leno to see if he could assist in getting a stop sign at the intersection. (The Board of Supervisors makes the final decision on installing new stop signs, based upon the recommendations of DPT.)

"He was very receptive to the idea," says Gardener, "and told us to get together a petition to show that the community wanted the sign. So we put a petition in the store and some flyers up, explaining the effort, and we collected 400 signatures. We also encouraged people to call Mark's office to put a human voice to the issue and let him know how important it was to get the stop sign. A lot of people made phone calls and put energy into the effort, so everything moved very fast through the Board of Supervisors."

By Oct. 13, the corner of Castro and Jersey had a four-way stop.

"The intersection has changed dramatically since the four-way stop has been installed," says Mitchell Schoenbrun. "Drivers are more cautious coming down the hill on Jersey Street to Castro. They know there is a stop sign and they need to stop. A pedestrian can now cross that intersection without fearing for his life."

The new stop sign has also invigorated other activists in the neighborhood. Bill Slocum, a barber at J&S Barbering on Church Street, has launched a campaign for a four-way stop at the intersection of Church and 25th.

Ever since he witnessed a "grisly" accident at that intersection in early October, "I've been telling everyone who sits in my chair that we need a four-way intersection there," he says.

Around 9 a.m. on Oct. 7, Slocum was near the corner, walking to work with his girlfriend, when he saw a BMW run the stop sign at 25th Street and collide with a man on a Harley-Davidson motorcycle coming down Church, where there is no stop. The motorcyclist was severely injured, and lost his foot in the accident.

"If there had been a stop sign at Church, the motorcyclist would have had to stop, and the accident might have been prevented," says Slocum.

In late October, with advice from Gardener at Video Wave, Slocum began circulating a petition at the barbershop asking for support of a four-way stop. So far, he has collected more than 300 signatures.

In early November, an unknown person tacked a hand-drawn stop sign on 25th Street on a telephone pole near the building formerly occupied by Kennedy's Bar. "STOP" was printed in big white letters against an orange backdrop. Someone also trimmed a tree whose branches had been obstructing drivers' views of the official stop sign at 25th Street.

Stephanie Holstein, who owns J&S, a 23-year institution in the neighborhood, believes "traffic has gotten much, much worse in Noe Valley over the past three years. So many people park their large cars and trucks on the corners that it makes it difficult for drivers to see if traffic is coming into the intersection. Drivers have to inch way out into the intersection to check traffic," she says. "I've seen cars inch up into an intersection and be hit by oncoming traffic."

"Plus, there are many more cars around here than there used to be. It used to be



Let's stop, and celebrate with a photo op! An obliging city worker helps hold one of the new signs gracing the corner of Castro and Jersey streets. The rest of the gang are (left to right) Bob Hartnagel (an aide to Supervisor Mark Leno), Martin Schoenbrun, Dave Monks, Mark Leno, Kenny Campbell, Alexander Gardener, Morfa Lewis-Mansi, and Bill Slocum.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

just single families in homes in Noe Valley. Now it's four or five single people living in a home because you have to have that many people to pay the rent — and they each have a car."

Adds Slocum, "I've only worked at this shop for three months, but already I've seen so much — people honking, skidding, yelling at each other. One woman who has lived in the neighborhood for 50 years told me that there have been two deaths in the last 11 years because of accidents at the intersection of Church and 25th. It's really important we

do something before someone gets killed or injured again."

If you are interested in joining the Noe Valley Stop Sign Committee, drop by

Video Wave at 1431 Castro St., or call Alexander Gardener at 415-550-7577. To sign Slocum's petition, stop by the barbershop at 1298 Church St. □

The Best Way to Get a Four-Way

Video Wave owner Alexander Gardener is part of a group of local residents who recently succeeded in getting a four-way stop at Castro and Jersey streets. Here's Gardener's advice to other merchants or residents who would like to see a stop sign installed at their corner.

- Document that there is a safety issue. Take photographs of the accidents, if possible. Make sure the police are called to the scene to take a report. When deciding whether to approve a stop sign for an intersection, the city's Department of Parking and Traffic checks the safety record of an intersection through Police Department collision reports. If a police report is not filed for a particular accident, then DPT will never know about it.

- Organize a petition to gather signatures from the neighborhood to show a stop sign is something the community desires.

- Lobby your district supervisor to request the stop sign. The Department of Parking and Traffic makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, which in turn makes the final decision.

- Be willing to work out a compromise with DPT regarding Muni so that the stop sign will not impede Muni service. "When crossing Jersey and Church, you take your life in your hands," says Gardener. "We need a four-way stop there, but we'd be open to making an exception for Muni—so that Muni doesn't have to stop."

- Be persistent. Stay in touch with your supervisor and his or her aides. Check on their progress and provide them with any new information.

- Meanwhile, drive defensively, watch for pedestrians, and come to a complete stop at all existing stop signs. Better yet, consider taking the bus.

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Parents Start Scrambling to Get Into Good Schools

Continued from Page 1

public school if someone can reassure her about the process.

"I worry about the lottery system for getting the public school I want," Wolf says. "I read an article in the Sunday paper last summer about a woman who had a terrible experience getting a good public school for her kid. And to be honest," she adds, "I haven't heard much more."

Whichever school Wolf chooses, she wants to have an active role in her child's education. "I'd like to know that parents are involved."

Church Street resident and mom of two Ann Powell shares Wolf's qualms about playing the lottery for public school slots. But she feels even more uneasy about a piece of advice she received from a public school parent. That parent told her to lie about her address or her child's ethnicity to increase her chances of landing the school of her choice.

"If I go for a public school, I'm going to do it honestly, but I realize my chances of getting a good school are slim," she says.

These parents' fears are not completely unfounded. According to Margaret Wells, director of student placement for the San Francisco Unified School District, a judge ruled in December 1999 that the district may not use a child's race as a factor when deciding where to assign students. However, says Wells, the district is still committed to creating ethnically balanced schools. And for that reason, they'll continue to mix and match students.

Wells says district officials under new school superintendent Arlene Ackerman have spent months searching for a placement formula that is both legal and fair. The school district is planning to announce the new formula in early December.

Meanwhile, if parents do not wish their child to go to his or her assigned school, they may ask to enroll at an alternative school (or two or three). But to do this, they must fill out an "optional enrollment application," and cast their fate to the school district's human and digital sorters.

Since the best schools are often swamped with applications, parents have no guarantee they'll get their top choice.

Alvarado Gets a Thumbs-Up

Despite the red tape and uncertainty, many local families embrace the public schools. These parents and kids, along with their school principals and PTAs, are beckoning choosy parents in Noe Valley to give their neighborhood schools a closer look.

Josie Iselin is the PTA president at Alvarado Elementary at 625 Douglass St. Alvarado is the neighborhood school for about half of Noe Valley.

At one point several years ago, this school, with a student body of 465, faced troubling student achievement and low neighborhood enrollment. But Iselin is now presiding over a surge of parent enthusiasm for Alvarado's blossoming curriculum. "The school has a great energy," says Iselin, who lives near the school in Noe Valley. She rattles off several improvements, such as a computer lab, a fulltime science teacher, and Alvarado's Spanish-immersion program, which half of the students attend.

Add to that a list of programs like gardening, mural-making with professional artists, and after-school tutoring, and you have what Iselin says is "more than what most private schools can offer." Alvarado's PTA has 100 members this year.

Iselin noted that the school district cut Alvarado's budget by \$41,000 this year (several San Francisco public schools experienced similar cuts), but the PTA is

prepared to take up the slack as best it can to keep the momentum going.

Fairmount Starting to Lure Locals

Fairmount Elementary School at 65 Chenery St., which currently enrolls 370 students, has taken its cue from Alvarado's success. PTA President Chris Loughran says her school is following Alvarado's formula, from adopting the Spanish-immersion program to heavy recruiting of neighborhood families, right down to the student gardening club.

Fairmount also received a "Christmas in April" last spring, where various Bay Area businesses donated volunteers and cash to spruce up the school.

Loughran provides an exhaustive roll call of events and programs at Fairmount: Family Game Night, conflict resolution training for parents, a read-a-thon, a collaboration with volunteers from the Noe Valley Ministry, and a monthly open-door "principal's chat."

Like Alvarado, Fairmount also suffered a budget cut. Fairmount lost about \$30,000, and the PTA is scrambling to cover programs rather than eliminate them. While it was decided to cut the library technician position and parents are filling in for now, a science program was patched together with PTA money and special grants.

Fairmount received another grant of \$15,000 last year to increase parent involvement. Some of that money has been used to launch both English and Spanish classes for parents.

This is all beginning to entice neighborhood families to send their children.

"I'm tickled pink that we really are starting to draw more local families," says Loughran, noting that neighborhood enrollment is now up to about 20 percent of the student body. The PTA at Fairmount doubled this year to 75 members.

Edison Runs a Tight Ship

Closer to 24th Street is Edison Charter Academy, 3531 22nd St., a school that was privatized by Edison Schools Incorporated (the names are coincidental). This was done three years ago in an attempt to radically improve student achievement, which had lagged for several years.

Parent Dwight Duke's daughter has been at Edison for nearly two years, and he praises the school for its orderly atmosphere and long instruction hours. Edison's 500 students attend classes for eight hours a day. The school also requires uniforms. Duke likes Edison principal Vincent Matthews, too.

"Every morning he stands on a box with a megaphone and gives a pep talk to the kids," Duke says. "He always tells them, 'Have a great learning day!'"

Matthews does like his job. "The Edison design is playing out just as it should, and I'm really enjoying this," he says.

Student test scores for reading and math were in the teens before Edison became a charter school, and this year students are testing in the 30s and 40s. Matthews attributes the improvement to the longer school day (average for the school district is about six hours) and richer curriculum.

Rich indeed. Third-, fourth- and fifth-grade students each receive an iMac computer for home use. Parents, students, and teachers have an intranet system for communicating via web-site postings and email. Students have two electives each day, choosing from art, music, P.E., and Spanish.

Their workday is also intense. Students receive two 10-minute bathroom and water breaks a day, plus 35 minutes for lunch. (Elementary students in San Francisco's public schools receive a total



REAL ESTATE BUYERS BEWARE!

All the world is a stage...

By Richard Meyerson, Zephyr Real Estate

...especially when it comes to purchasing a home in San Francisco.

The phenomenon of staging has become big business in San Francisco and buyers are paying big bucks for the results. In Real Estate buzzword lingo, staging is the fine art of cleaning, de-cluttering, and redecorating with the specific goal of playing on buyer emotions. Once the buyer is hooked, they'll pay top dollar for the property, probably in competition with other hooked buyers.

Savvy sellers are paying from \$3,000 - \$5,000 to stage their properties and seeing up to a 10 fold return on this investment. There are a number of thriving companies that do nothing but stage homes. They have warehouses full of furniture and accessories to customize even the dullest of homes. The idea is to take a plain room and highlight it so as to make it look like it should be photographed for a magazine -- downplay the flaws of a room and depersonalize it. Add a few plants, some open books and bowls of fruit, and WOW! PRESTO! MAGIC! The room is transformed. As a buyer trying to get the best deal possible in this crazy market, it is imperative to understand the concept of staging and the psychology behind it in order to know the emotions at play when you fall in love with a home. Buying a home is an emotional decision. It is the biggest investment you'll ever make. It is the place where you are going to live

work, entertain and raise a family. Of course you want the home to feel right! The key is to remember that the house is just a shell. It is you, with your own individuality, taste and creativity that is going to make it your own. That's what makes a home. Don't let someone else's ideas of what a home should look like sway your decision on whether to buy.

Next time you look at a house, try this exercise: Stand in the middle of the room and look carefully at the walls, windows, floors, ceilings, etc. Look for defects. Staging makes a small room look bigger. Look at the lighting and windows. Then close your eyes and visually remove all the furnishings and accessories from the room. Visualize the room empty. It is VERY hard to do, even for us "professionals" who look at property all the time. Then imagine your personal belongings in the room.

Now here is the secret for getting the best deal on a property! Do the same exercise in a home that has not been staged. You know the type. Dirty dishes, unmade beds, junk everywhere. Maybe the carpet needs cleaning and the walls could use new paint. If you can close your eyes and remove everything in your mind as you did in the staged home, chances are your belongings will fit there just as well. For fewer bucks and with some creativity, the "ugly" home will be just as nice as a staged one for a lot less money! It's the homes that don't show well that are not getting as much competition in this seller's market. If you can save \$50,000 on a half million dollar property, it might be worth throwing on a coat of paint yourself. Don't you agree?

Richard Meyerson and Shari Malone work together at Zephyr Real Estate. Together, they have represented buyers and sellers of real estate for over 30 years. Shari is in the top 1/2 of 1% of Realtors nationwide, and Richard is well on his way. If you have questions, they invite your call or e-mail. 415-695-0552 x135 or x170. ShariMalone@Zephyr-re.com or MeyersonR@aol.com

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FISH & POULTRY

Continued on Next Page

Now's the Time to Sample the Schools

Continued from Previous Page

of 30 minutes for recess and 45 for lunch.)

Rooftop Stays Up There

Across the valley and up the hill at 443 Burnett Ave. sits an aptly named public school, Rooftop. It teaches students from kindergarten through eighth grade in two campuses across the street from each other. Principal Richard Curci has led Rooftop for three years. The school houses 600 students.

In its capacity as one of the district's "alternative" or magnet schools, Rooftop does not have neighborhood boundaries as such, but rather draws students from all over San Francisco. For the past two decades, Rooftop has enjoyed a reputation as one of the top alternative schools in San

Francisco. The students routinely perform well on academic achievement tests.

But ironically, Curci notes, the school is sometimes penalized for its success. Due to the students' higher test scores last year, the district cut \$86,000 from Rooftop's budget. "I've become an entrepreneurial grant writer (applying to various organizations for special one-time gifts of cash), and the PTA raised over \$100,000 last year to supplement our \$50,000 budget," Curci reports.

He says the PTA also generates money for tutors, field trips, and visiting artists. All this makes for a rich arts environment, which Curci believes is vital to an excellent education.

Rooftop is so popular that 60 prospective parents showed up recently for a scheduled tour. But not everyone who chooses Rooftop can win a spot for their child. There is always a waiting list, Curci laments. And although he's an advocate for Rooftop, he asks parents to keep an open mind about other schools.

"I tell them [the key to a school's success] is a combination of parents' and teachers' extra time. That is what makes the difference." In Curci's view, any school can be transformed into a winner.

Parochial Schools Stress Tradition

About two blocks east of Alvarado sits a 60-year-old Noe Valley institution, St. Philip's School.

The Catholic school at 665 Elizabeth St. boasts a kindergarten-to-eighth-grade program that enrolls 250 students. Principal Steve Farren says the school "has a lot in common with other Catholic school programs, providing a very traditional curriculum and diverse student body."

Farren says about 60 percent of his students come from the surrounding Noe Valley neighborhood.

Parent involvement begins, as is usual in private school programs, with tuition. St. Philip's costs \$3,048 a year per child,

LETTERS 33¢

Hair Salon Another Casualty of Capitalism

Editor:

I am writing this letter to set the record straight about an item that was in the Rumors section of the July/August 2000 *Noe Valley Voice*. The column mentioned the unexpected closing of Mylene's Hair Salon on the corner of Castro and Jersey. What the column did not mention is that Mylene did not leave the recently sold building voluntarily. She was evicted by the then new owner.

The building had been purchased by a tenants rights attorney, who was representing former tenants in the building as part of a lawsuit against the original owner. Purchased at a poorly attended auction, by the plaintiff's attorney, the building sold for a mere \$300,000. The building has since changed hands, is currently owned by the original plaintiffs in the case, and is rumored to be back on the market for well over \$1,000,000 (in spite of its crumbling condition).

Many longtime Noe Valley residents have been troubled by the events surrounding this building. The original owner was an elderly man who, incidentally, still believes he owns the building and continued to pay the utilities and taxes for five months after the transfer of ownership.

Another sad example of what is happening to struggling small businesses all over Noe Valley!

Diane Rosen
Noe Valley resident

So What If He's a Pornographer

Editor:

At first I was offended by Scott Bingham's candidacy for District 8 supervisor. In this family neighborhood, with its family values, how could our needs be served by a pornographer?

After reading his statement in the voter pamphlet and his answers to your questionnaire in the November issue, however, I began to realize that his platform, based upon direct democracy, would empower us, individually and united, to effect change in local government. His job outside of being supervisor does not affect his politics. My initial offense was just a reaction.

His "no personal opinion" stance is refreshing in a race polluted with candidates' personal opinions and lobbying by neighborhood special interest groups.

I'm voting for Scott Bingham!

Janet Mattos
23rd Street

Editor's Note: Unfortunately for Janet Mattos, Scott Bingham failed to win enough votes to qualify for the Dec. 12 runoff in the District 8 supervisor's race. The two top vote-getters were incumbent supervisor Mark Leno and AIDS activist Eileen Hansen. If you missed the November Voice and would like to read Leno's and Hansen's answers to our pre-election questionnaire, you can find the issue at the Noe Valley Library or on our web site at www.noevalleyvoice.com.

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The PTA is also an essential part of the school. "It supports the school in three important ways: parent education, financial support, and social events," says Farren.

St. Paul's School, at Church and 29th streets in Upper Noe Valley, is another long-established parochial school. It boasts a brand-new school building, with a computer lab and complete Internet hookup for every classroom.

Sister Ann Cronin is the principal and the only person of the cloth on staff at the school of 250 students. She says the student body grew by 30 children last year, and that 30 to 40 percent of St. Paul's students live in the neighborhood.

She reports that the children and staff are enjoying their new digs, but everyone is eager for the seismic retrofitting going on next door at the main church to be done.

According to Cronin, St. Paul's has a strong reading program. "Kids who go on from here do very well," she says. Religion is also taught daily, for 30 to 40 minutes, at each grade level.

Tuition at St. Paul's is \$3,200 per year, and scholarships are available.

But at both schools, prospective students must pass a test to determine whether they are ready for a parochial school environment.

Once the child is accepted, parents commit to a certain number of volunteer hours per year (20 per family at St. Philip's, 30 at St. Paul's). Most parents devote their hours to fundraising projects. Both schools take applications starting in December and have deadlines in January.

Parents Group Says Go Public

Parents who have financial or other reasons for choosing public schools but who are frustrated or confused should contact Sandra Halladey. Halladey is a founding member of the San Francisco chapter of Parents for Public Schools (PPS). She lives on Castro Street and walks her children to Alvarado every day.

LETTERS 33¢

THE VOICE welcomes your letters to the editor. Write the *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Or send email to jaxvoice@aol.com. Please include your name, address, and phone number. (Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication.) You may also send us mail via our web site: www.noevalleyvoice.com. Note that letters may be edited for brevity or clarity.



Her group is part of a national organization dedicated to improving public schools.

Halladey feels strongly about helping parents who become alienated or stressed even before they enter the public school maze. "We like to bring together families who are in the public schools with families of preschoolers so they can help them navigate the system," she says.

Working hand in hand with the local PTAs, she offers tips on such things as completing optional enrollment forms and touring schools. PPS members meet regularly with school district officials to lobby for large and small changes, all of which are meant to create a more parent-friendly environment in the San Francisco public schools.

To link up with Parents for Public Schools, call 695-1949. For more information about any of the schools described above, please call their offices:

Alvarado School	695-5695
Edison Charter Academy	695-5848
Fairmount School	695-5669
Rooftop Alternative School	695-5691
St. Paul's School	648-2055
St. Philip's School	824-8467



Hollyrock Makes 28th a Jolly Block

Continued from Page X

season. Each year, he sends invitations to his closest friends. One year, he sent out "time cards." Each guest was instructed to decorate his time card and then "punch in" on arrival. Tinsley has kept the cards in a timecard holder, some of them trimmed in sequins, others with decoupage.

Occasionally, Tinsley gets surprise visitors on party night.

"People see the bubbles—there are bubbles that float out into the street during the party—and they wander up the stairs out of curiosity. I tell them to come on back and grab a drink!"

Tinsley is notorious for jumping in the shower and leaving a friend in charge just when the party is about to start. One year he turned off the water to the sound of the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus caroling in his living room.

Tinsley starts planning his Christmas decorations in the summer, because that is the best time to work outside. Over the years, through trial and error, he has figured out which decorations work and which should be retired for posterity. "It's a science," quips Tinsley.

He begins by cleaning the yard and sorting his tools and tool cabinet. He looks at photos of Hollyrock from Christmases past, trying to figure out what he wants to do differently. Then he pulls the decorations out of storage from under the house. He usually starts stringing the lights the last weekend of November, and Hollyrock is in full garland by Dec. 1.

"I've never had a major accident with the decorations, although one winter I had put these icicles painted on wood board on the eaves. That night there was a storm, and whole pieces—eight feet tall—were torn away. A few days later, my next-door neighbor who had been away on vacation found them—they had blown up to his balcony."

Tinsley has integrated many of the decorative elements into what one of his

Hooray for Hollyrock. Donnie Tinsley has had help over the years in adding the finishing touches to many of the decorations that cover his hillside home on 28th Street. But he's still top elf.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

neighbors has dubbed Ice Mountain. Ice Mountain often harbors the penguins and the elf village.

Over the years, Hollyrock's neighbors have graciously let Tinsley use their front yards and electrical power. Tinsley's house does not have any outside outlets, but his neighbors' houses do. If they notice the increase in their December electric bills, they don't say anything to him, and have always turned down his offers of money.

In fact, complete strangers have offered Tinsley money for the delight Hollyrock has given them. One year, a woman left a card with a \$20 check in his mailbox. Tinsley invited her to the Christmas party, and she's been attending ever since. He's received bottles of wine, along with thank-you notes for all the cheer Hollyrock has brought during the holidays.

Carolers often videotape their performances outside the house. Channel 2 News has used Hollyrock as a backdrop for its weather reports. One year a limo pulled up in front of the house, and a girl jumped out. "Are you Donnie?" she asked, and when Tinsley confirmed that he was, she brought him a glass of champagne from her car.

Surprisingly, the holidays depress Tinsley, which is why he likes to keep as busy as possible. His childhood in Tennessee influenced his zest for holiday decorating as well. Tinsley's parents decorated their house every year, often keeping their son busy by having him paint elves that his mother drew. One year, his mother cut over 500 five-point stars out of cardboard, covered them in foil, and hung them on the roof of their house. The next year, she cut holes in the center of the stars and added Christmas lights.

Tinsley's parents divorced when he was 10, and the holiday decorating ended. After his stepfather died, Tinsley went back to Tennessee and retrieved the family's Santa and reindeer. A friend helped him paint and shellac the original paper images on wood, and Tinsley has used them on Hollyrock ever since.

Tinsley used to host elf-painting parties. Many of the elves in his yard have special meaning, reminding him of particular friends while at the same time charming complete strangers.

"It's fun for me," Tinsley says as he kicks a small ball for his Schnauzer Astro to chase across the kitchen. "It's like being in a parade in reverse, seeing the parade of cars go by." Sometimes people venture up the stairs to take pictures, but Tinsley doesn't mind.

"Every year, I say this is the last year I will do a big party," says Tinsley with a sigh. "This year, the party happens to fall on my birthday, and it's the Millennium Party. So I think this is really the last year."

Tinsley reflects for a moment. "But as long as my health is good, I'll continue to do the decorations." □

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December 12 *Election Endorsement*

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San Francisco Examiner

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Mark Leno is a leader for better planning.

He authored legislation, passed unanimously by the Board, that makes it harder for large chain stores to move into the Castro and North Beach. He has introduced legislation that puts limits on "monster homes" in Noe Valley, Glen Park, and Castro/Eureka Valley.

Working with housing advocates and city planning groups, he has authored legislation that encourages more efficient land use for new and affordable housing along busy transit corridors such as Mission and Geary Streets.

Mark Leno supported Prop L and is endorsed by former Planning Commissioner Dennis Antenore who was fired by Mayor Brown for speaking out on city planning. Mark is also endorsed by Prop L authors Sue Hestor and Calvin Welch, and has introduced legislation that redefines office space to include dot-coms and multimedia firms.

EXPERIENCE COUNTS. MARK LENO HAS IT. DISTRICT 8 NEEDS IT.

Double-Park at Your Own Peril: Tickets Upped To \$100 on 24th

By Steve Steinberg

Thinking of double-parking on 24th Street for a few minutes while you run in to get a latte to go? Better think twice. That cup of java could cost you \$100 if one of San Francisco's ever-vigilant meter maids happens by while you're away from your car.

In an effort to improve the flow of traffic along congested Muni routes, San Francisco earlier this year doubled the fine for double-parking on certain city streets from \$50 to \$100. The city began active enforcement of the new tickets on Oct. 23.

Twenty-fourth Street between Church and Castro is one of the corridors where the hefty toll applies. However, the \$100 fines are in effect only during peak commute hours—from 6 to 9 a.m. and 4 to 7 p.m. So if you get caught at any other time, the good news is you only have to pay the regular \$50 fine!

The new policy is part of Mayor Willie Brown's "Unclog the Streets" campaign, designed to improve public transportation. "If you're going to move Muni, you have to move traffic," explains Diana Hammons, spokesperson for the San Francisco Department of Parking and Traffic (DPT).

The city, says Hammons, particularly wants to change the habits of drivers of delivery trucks, who often double-park to unload their goods on busy commercial streets. "We hope the increased fines will encourage them to deliver at other than [the busiest] hours."

Traffic control officers will, however, be able to exercise discretion in handing out the \$100 tickets.

"There have to be exceptions," says Steve Johnson, head of the DPT's enforcement division. "If someone's [double-parked] while picking up an elderly person, we're not going to give a ticket. A meter maid might just give a beep at a double-parked car, especially if there's someone sitting in the car." Johnson adds that the city wants to make traffic a little more convenient for everyone, but "in a humane fashion."

The new double-fine policy is being implemented on a trial basis and is set to expire in March 2001. However, according to Hammons, Supervisor Gavin Newsom has asked for a one-year extension of the trial period. Hammons also said that the decision to raise fines came after a yearlong investigation by a task force comprised of residents, merchants groups,

and officials from Muni and DPT.

Originally, she said, the city wanted to increase the fines along all Muni routes, but officials realized that doing so might pose a hardship for small businesses, who are dependent on drivers being able to make deliveries. Hammons added that even though the fines have gone up, DPT has not necessarily increased its enforcement of the no-double-parking rule. Right now, she says, the main focus of the department is clearing double-parkers from the downtown area.

Not everyone thinks discouraging double-parking on 24th Street is such a great idea. Attorney Robert Roddick, outgoing president of the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association, fears that commercial vehicles will simply move to residential side streets and double-park there if the penalties become too severe on 24th Street.

Under state law, Roddick says, delivery trucks have the right to double-park on any street and unload their goods unless there is a specific prohibition on that street. Roddick adds that if trucks move off 24th Street, residents might also see pushcarts filled with merchandise going down neighborhood streets on their way to area stores. He also worries that the city might increase the number of yellow zones on 24th—to obviate the need for commercial vehicles to double-park—making Noe Valley's already terrible parking situation even worse.

Roddick says the Merchants Association was not consulted about the increase in fines. "We did not feel there was a real problem and would prefer that the existing laws be enforced," he said.

Local merchants echo Roddick's sentiments, saying that double-parking is not the main culprit on 24th Street. Dave Kloski, manager of Real Food Company, thinks the city should zero in on people who illegally park in the yellow loading zones. "They're the ones who cause the double-parking in the first place."

Kloski also doubts that higher fines without tighter enforcement will have much of an effect. "People don't get caught enough," he says.

Marlene Dunleavy, owner of Noe Valley Video at 3936 24th St., puts double-parking way down her list, too. Stalled buses, trucks unloading, and people waiting to parallel-park their cars are much more of a hindrance to traffic, she says.

Finally, it seems that people who double-park may continue to do so despite the cost. One Noe Valley resident, calling herself Lola, who was double-parked just off 24th Street last month, said that normally she doesn't double-park, but that for quick stops, such as returning a video, she would still chance getting a ticket.

Janine, another Noe Valley resident, who double-parked on 24th Street in front of Manhattan Bagel to run inside to buy

a cup of coffee, also said she would probably continue to run the risk of a \$100 fine. "Sometimes you just gotta double-park," she said.

Next Year for Nickel Meters

In other traffic news, the Department of Parking and Traffic says it has entered into final negotiations with a vendor to install electronic parking meters throughout the entire city. The meters will replace the present mechanical ones and will accept nickels, dimes, and quarters, as well as debit cards.

In the early 1990s, San Francisco changed most parking meters so that they would accept quarters only. However, after citizens expressed anger at the quarters-only policy, the Board of Supervisors in 1995 passed an ordinance ordering DPT to install electronic meters that would accept nickels and dimes. After much bureaucratic delay, the process of installing the new meters should start in February 2001, according to officials at Parking and Traffic. □



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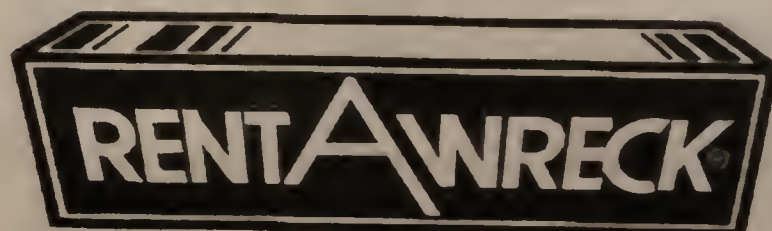
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Animal Company	Embassy Suites	Lovejoy's Tea Room	Sea Breeze Cleaners
The Ark	Eye Q Optometry	Martha & Bros. Coffee	Sebastian Wines
Artemisia	El Mayahaul	Mayor Willie Brown	See's Candies
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Berkeley Repertory	Fast Frame	MikeyTom Market	S.F. Giants
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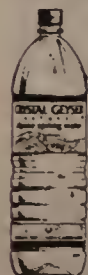
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POLICE BEAT

The Season of Giving— And Taking

By Officer Lois Perillo

The good news is there were no Noe Valley robberies during the month of October. The bad news is that guns were used in the two robberies reported in early November.

On Monday, Nov. 13, at 2:50 p.m., a 35-year-old man hit Cotton Basics on the corner of 24th and Castro. He pointed a gun (or simulated one) through his jacket and demanded money from the person working behind the cash register. After the suspect took the money and left, the worker alerted a local merchant who happened to be in the shop, and she immediately ran out and looked for the robber. He had already fled the area, and got away with it—for now.

In the second incident, two women in their 40s were walking at about 10 p.m. on the 4300 block of 23rd Street on Friday, Nov. 17, when they were approached by a man in his 20s brandishing a blue steel semi-automatic gun. When he demanded their money, the women remained focused and threw their purses a short distance away, which diverted the robber's attention to their property. He grabbed the purses, but dropped his cap while fleeing south on Douglass Street. A nearby resident phoned the police when he heard one of the women yelling at the departing robber. Luckily, neither woman was injured in the incident, and they were able to provide a detailed description of the suspect.

The Red-Handed Burglar

On Saturday, Nov. 13, at 3:45 p.m., a 45-year-old woman heard banging coming from the front of her downstairs neighbor's unit on the 1000 block of Noe Street. She investigated and found a 31-year-old man standing in front of the window, claiming he was fixing the window. Believing he was attempting to break in, but not wanting to tip off the suspect, the woman calmly replied, "Oh, okay," and returned to her flat, where she phoned police.

Officer David Manning, of the Canine Patrol, was first on the scene. He found the front window lock broken and the overconfident suspect right there in the flat, with several screwdrivers, jewelry, coins, and a credit card in his possession. After the "window repairman" was arrested, the residents of the flat came home and identified the stolen coins and some of the jewelry as theirs. Further investigation found that the remaining jewelry and the credit card were taken in an earlier burglary on Capp Street. In that case, the front door was forced open to gain entry—I wonder if he had said he was repairing the door.

The suspect was booked on four felonies and two misdemeanors, and he is presently residing at county jail, pending a December court case.

Kudos to the witness, whose clear thinking brought about the arrest of the perp.

Unfortunately, this was only one of two dozen break-ins reported to police in October and November (through Nov. 22). In October, nine houses were burglarized, along with one apartment, one construction site, and one store. In November, five apartments were hit, along with four houses, two flats, and one store.

Two of the burglaries were "hot prowls," where the suspect entered while the residents were at home. The first occurred Thursday, Oct. 19, at 3:45 p.m., on the 3700 block of 26th Street; the second happened on Wednesday, Nov. 8, at 11:05 a.m., on the 900 block of Guerrero Street. In both cases, the descriptions of the suspect were similar to that of the burglar caught red-handed in the Nov. 13 Noe Street incident.

Love Should Not Hurt

On Monday, Oct. 23, at 1 a.m., a 42-year-old woman was pushed by her 42-year-old husband and fell onto a desk, causing a laceration to her forehead. Both spouses had been drinking at their home on the 4300 block of Cesar Chavez Street. Upon arriving on the scene, Officer Matthew O'Leary summoned an ambulance to take the woman to the hospital and arrested the man, who was booked at county jail on a felony.

On Wednesday, Oct. 25, at 5:10 p.m., a 36-year-old woman who had been crying and disoriented was helped by a worker at Just for Fun on 24th Street after she said her husband pushed her down at Castro and 24th, injuring her ribs and ankle. As she told her story, the woman spotted her husband across the street, and the worker noted that the man's head and right hand were bloodied. The husband began to cross the street to approach the injured woman, but the Just for Fun employee told him to stay put. The man complied, but took off before police arrived. Officer Susan Nangle ordered an ambulance for the injured woman, who admitted that she and her husband had been drinking that day and that there was a history of domestic violence between them. Officer Nangle secured an emergency protective order, which barred the suspect from contacting his wife.

In the last case of October, on Sunday, Oct. 29, at about 11:15 a.m., a woman resident of the 4100 block of 26th Street reported that her 40-year-old husband had pushed her to the floor, injuring her right shoulder and knee. She said he had become angry about her retaining a house key to use upon her return from shopping. By the time Officer Lorraine Lombardo arrived on the scene, the husband had fled. The woman declined an ambulance, in favor of seeking her own medical aid. Officer Lombardo later secured an emergency protective order against the husband.

A Dangerous Defenestration

Two older teenage boys, involved in a fistfight in front of Lite for Life, at 1300 Sanchez, on Wednesday, Oct. 11, at 3:45 p.m., broke the store's plate-glass window when one of them propelled the other into the pane. When the glass shattered, it sent thick shards toward two women and a 10-month-old baby who were inside the business. Both teens fled before Officer Josephine Anzalone's arrival.

Don't Touch Me There

In a disturbing case listed as sexual battery, a 32-year-old woman who had contracted for a paid massage from a male masseuse reported that the man had made touches that she believed were inappropriate and meant to sexually arouse her. The case was forwarded to both the Inspectors and Permit Bureaus for documentation, since the woman requested no further action at this time. Good for her, for coming forward to report the incident.

Where Are They Now?

The 21-year-old man who was arrested for vandalizing vehicles at 22nd and Chattanooga Street in June 1999 is continuing his participation in a pre-trial diversion project.

The 50-year-old man who was arrested

Continued on Page 15

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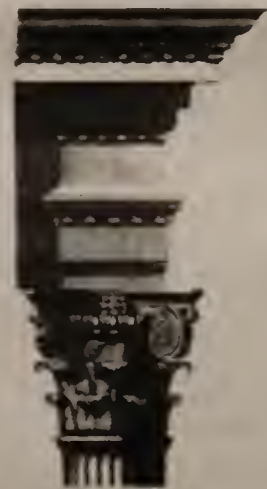
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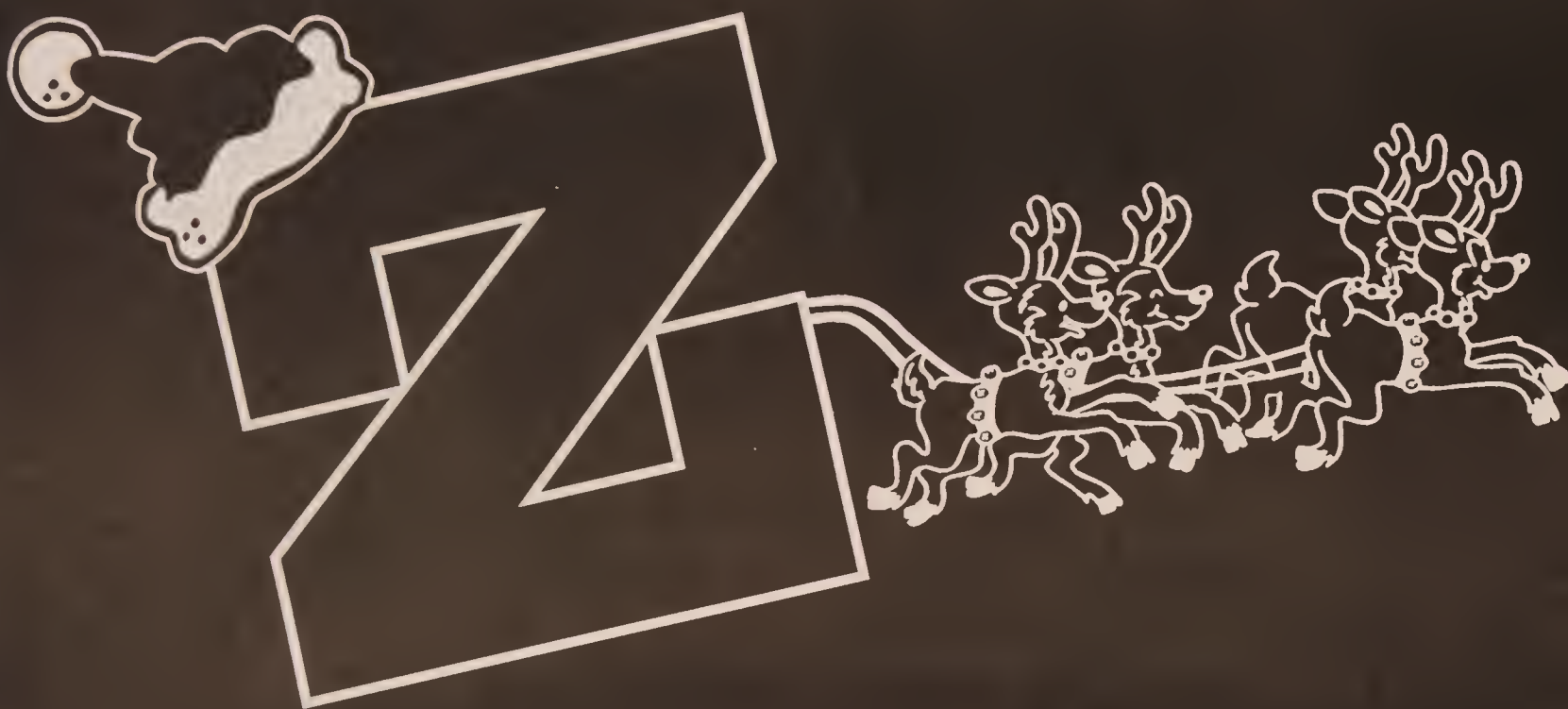
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Jason Mark, Favorite Son at Local Cafe, Dies at 30

By Kathryn Guta

The neighborhood was shocked and saddened to learn that Jason Mark, son of Karen and Mervyn Mark, died on Aug. 9, 2000, from lung cancer.

Jason, 30, had worked in his parents' What's for Dessert Bakery-Cafe on Church Street for most of the 11 years the cafe was in operation. A year has passed since What's for Dessert was transformed into Amberjack Sushi, but Noe Valleyans have not forgotten the warm smile and friendliness of young chef Jason.

Jason Mark grew up in Daly City and went to Our Lady of Mercy Grammar School. Long-term patrons of What's for Dessert saw Jason literally grow up behind the shiny glass counters of the cafe. After he graduated from St. Ignatius College Prep in 1988, Jason signed up at City College of San Francisco and received his culinary arts degree.

His degree in hand, Jason left San Francisco for a year and cooked at the well-known resort of Greenbrier in West Virginia. When he returned to the city, he worked as a chef at the Watergate Restaurant on Valencia Street, Moose's in North Beach, and later at Silks at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel. All along, he was a regular Sunday presence at What's for Dessert, serving up fruit waffles and frittatas to an admiring crowd.

"You could really see the professionalism when he served a dish," said his father, Mervyn Mark.

Christine Springer, a Sunday regular at What's for Dessert, agrees. "Jason made architectural arrangements with fruit and yogurt. It made me feel special."

Jason's flair and sense of style ex-



Jason Mark works with a ready smile in this 1994 photo at What's for Dessert.

Photo courtesy of Mervyn and Karen Mark

tended beyond his presentation of dishes at the cafe. "Jason once told me that he arrived with a limo to escort a girl to her 21st birthday celebration," remembers Springer.

"He was a generous, sweet-hearted person," said What's for Dessert regular Evelyn Clair. "I loved sitting down with Jason and talking with him about life, travel, and adventure. He was eager to gain from others' experiences."

In December of 1999, Jason became ill with a respiratory condition. In May, he was diagnosed with lung cancer and started chemotherapy and radiation. He died a short time later, in August, surrounded by his loving family and friends.

His sister, Jennifer Mark, said Jason was courageous till the end. "Jason was not afraid of dying. He was just afraid of the effects of the chemotherapy."

"He was a healthy person who never smoked," said his heartbroken father. "No one understands what happened." Still, the elder Mark wonders about possible environmental hazards, among them the brick wood-burning ovens in the restaurants where Jason worked as a chef.

Mervyn and Karen Mark want to express their gratitude for the warm and loving support they have received from people in Noe Valley. Three months after Jason's death, sympathy cards continued to pour in to their Daly City home. "I don't know how to describe it," said Mervyn. "It shows how unique and special Noe Valley is."

In addition to a memorial service at Our Lady of Mercy Church in Daly City, the family attended a gathering in the Noe Valley home of Evelyn and Richard Clair. Friends wanting to remember Jason spanned the generations from teens to octogenarians. They sang songs, recited poetry, told stories, and listened to an essay written by Jason himself. "Now I must face the idea of my college life," wrote the 17-year-old Jason in a theology assignment at St. Ignatius. "I will probably be on my own and have to take care of myself, but I am willing to take that chance and experience life to the fullest."

Mervyn and Karen Mark are interested in helping others with lung cancer as well as raising public awareness about the disease. (This year lung cancer will kill more people than breast, colon, and prostate cancer combined. Yet, in funding and research, it remains an invisible epidemic.)

To that end, they have started the Jason Mark Lung Cancer Fund through Dr. Paul Brunetta at UCSF. Donations sent to the fund will be used for research that will help doctors select chemotherapy agents which are sensitive to a patient's particular type of tumor, something that would have benefited young Jason. The fund has already received \$8,000 in Jason's name.

Please send donations to the Jason Mark Lung Cancer Fund, c/o Dr. Paul Brunetta, Pulmonary Medicine, Room B501, University of California at San Francisco, 1600 Divisadero St., San Francisco, CA 94115. □

POLICE BEAT

Continued from Page 13

for battery on a parking control officer on the 3300 block of 22nd Street in December 1999 was found guilty and has asked for a new trial.

The 40-year-old man who was arrested for aggravated assault and vandalism at the Rover's Bar in September 1999 completed his pre-trial diversion this November, and charges were dismissed.

The 34-year-old man arrested for spousal battery on the 1200 block of Dolores Street in February continues to appear in court for his progress reports. The same is true for the 37-year-old man arrested in February for non-cohabitant spousal battery on the 1300 block of Douglass Street. Both men are on probation for 36 months.

The 42-year-old man who was arrested for check forgery in April at Washington Mutual Bank failed to appear for his November court date, so the judge issued a bench warrant for his arrest.

The 47-year-old man who was arrested for shoplifting at Starbucks by an off-duty officer in May, and for strong-arm robbery at Global Exchange in September, failed to appear for his October court dates. The judge issued two bench warrants, but we only have to arrest him once.

The Never-Ending Con

A caller named Gwen reports that a

Latin male in his late 30s came to her door on Jersey Street near Dolores and told her that he had chased away a person sleeping on her property. Then he announced that he was collecting for his daughter's peewee soccer team.

Now does this sound familiar? Shades of Jim the Con Man? "Jim" was the man who falsely solicited for his daughter's athletic team while representing himself as a block captain, SAFE worker, and even a police officer. Jim also opportunistically burglarized some of the homes he solicited.

I am happy to report that Gwen did not give money to this solicitor. Instead, she told him she requires documentation before she even thinks about giving.

So, a reminder as we enter the season of giving: Do give money to your favorite charities, and if you are so moved, give food and clothing to individuals. But please think twice about those solicitors who appear at your door. If they are collecting money for a group, they are required to register at the Police Permit Bureau, where they get an official ID card.

Anyone may ask for anything, anywhere, making up any kind of tall tale. But many solicitors are bullies and count on your discomfort when they invade your personal boundaries. They know you might give money just to get them to go away. Is this the true reason you want to give? Only you have the power to decide.

Meanwhile, Back at the Ranch...

I'm in my sixth month of pregnancy and feeling good—except for the burning in my shoulders. I've gained about 18 pounds and I mostly walk for exercise. A few weeks ago, we had the big ultrasound

and firmly told the doc that we did not want to know the baby's sex. Heck, we already had the CVS (a chromosomal test similar to an amnio) at 12 weeks, and could have known then. Our friends and my mother think that Heather and I should elect to know or that we at least ought to give our permission so that *they* can know!

I'd like to give a special welcome to baby Ella, who made her debut on Monday, Nov. 20, at 11:21 p.m., weighing 8 pounds, 10 ounces. Congratulations to Serina and Lisa! In just three short months, Ella, you'll have a cousin.

As the winter solstice approaches and the daylight grows short, I wish everyone a peaceful holiday. Be safe and continue to watch out for one another. My fellow officer and partner Lorraine Lombardo will see you on patrol. □

San Francisco Police Officer Lois Perillo keeps tabs on crime from Valencia to Grand View and 21st to Cesar Chavez Street. If you would like to discuss a crime or safety problem, call her at 558-5404, the community policing line at Mission Police Station, 630 Valencia St.

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Keeping up with New York and Texas

You might not think New Yorkers and Texans are much alike. Tall buildings, fast-paced living and pastrami on rye on the one hand; wide-open spaces, cowboy boots and barbecue on the other. But, residents of the Empire State and the Lone Star State do have one thing in common: they're likely paying less than you are for long-distance calls.

Increased competition in the telephone markets in New York and Texas is bringing consumers lower prices, better service and new, innovative offerings. Telecommunications companies are fighting to win customers who want the full range of services — local and long-distance calling, Internet, wireless and more.

Why New York and Texas? In both states, the local Bell telephone company has been approved to enter the long-distance marketplace. Approved first by state regulators and then by the Federal Communications Commission, Bell Atlantic in New York and Southwestern Bell in Texas have emerged as full-service providers, competing for long-distance customers against companies like AT&T and WorldCom.

The results were immediate. Long-distance prices fell overnight as established providers scrambled to meet the low prices offered by Bell. The same companies rushed to match the newcomer's offering of simple, easy-to-understand calling plans with no monthly minimums or hidden charges. And residential customers and small businesses — once ignored by the long-distance giants for being too small — found themselves sorting through competing offers for local telephone service.

Californians can expect the same savings and expanded choices when Pacific Bell is allowed to compete in the long-distance marketplace here. The California Public Utilities Commission is in the final stages of reviewing Pacific Bell's long-distance application and is expected to issue a decision later this year.

California's local telephone marketplace is already more competitive than New York's or Texas'. More than 260 companies are authorized to provide local and long-distance telephone service in the state, and more customers get their local service from a competing carrier than in any other state.

California customers are entitled to increased competition in the long-distance market, and are ready for the savings, service and innovations Texans and New Yorkers already enjoy.

Zoon Nguyen
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For more information on this and other telecommunications issues, visit www.projectconnectcalifornia.org.



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Photo by Pamela Gerard

NOE BUYS / NOE RENTS

Home Prices, Rents Remain High in October

The cost of buying a home in Noe Valley was virtually the same in October as it was in September, according to figures supplied to the *Voice* by Zephyr Real Estate. "We're running pretty stable," said Zephyr manager Randall Kostick. "The only statistical difference was that the 5+ buildings came up to asking price." Among the 18 single-family homes sold in October, the average price was \$950,006. The top seller, going for more than \$1.5 million, was a three-bedroom, three-bath house located in the 4000 block of 26th Street. The least expensive of all properties sold in Noe Valley was a \$425,500 condo. Obviously, demand is still high, said Kostick. "But I'd be interested to see whether we'll have a slowdown in December and January. We used to get slow over the holidays, but the last couple of years, things have stayed busy. Will the current run continue? I don't know," he said. On the apartment front, the latest listings reported by Rent Tech Rentals (through September 2000) show what would-be renters have known for a long time: it's impossible to find even a studio apartment in Noe Valley for under \$1,000.

Noe Valley House Sales – October 2000*

Total Sales (Closings During Month)	Low Price (\$)	High Price (\$)	Average Price (\$)	Average Days on Market	Sale Price as % of List Price
<i>Single-family homes</i>					
18	530,000	1,525,000	950,006	32	112%
<i>Condominiums</i>					
4	425,500	900,000	615,625	28	109%
<i>2 to 4 unit buildings</i>					
5	830,700	1,075,000	961,762	50	101%
<i>5+ unit buildings</i>					
2	650,000	1,295,000	972,500	24	99%

Noe Valley House Sales – September 2000*

Total Sales (Closings During Month)	Low Price (\$)	High Price (\$)	Average Price (\$)	Average Days on Market	Sale Price As % of List Price
<i>Single-family homes</i>					
14	680,000	1,535,000	954,761	25	113%
<i>Condominiums</i>					
6	248,000	950,000	603,333	35	108%
<i>2 to 4 unit buildings</i>					
5	575,000	1,775,000	889,800	33	114%
<i>5+ unit buildings</i>					
1	717,500	717,500	717,500	21	90%

Noe Valley Rentals**

Apartment Size	Average Rents (July–September 2000)	Average Rents (April–June 2000)	% Increase (+) or Decrease (–)
<i>Studio</i>	\$ 1,194 / mo.	\$ 1,212 / mo.	– 1.5%
<i>1 bedroom</i>	2,056 / mo.	1,809 / mo.	+ 13.7%
<i>2 bedrooms</i>	2,908 / mo.	2,730 / mo.	+ 6.6%
<i>3 or more bedrooms</i>	3,857 / mo.	3,641 / mo.	+ 5.9%

*Information provided to the *Noe Valley Voice* courtesy of Zephyr Real Estate (www.zephyr-re.com) and based on all Noe Valley home sales (closings) recorded during month. "Noe Valley" in this survey is defined as the area bordered by Grand View, 22nd, Guerrero, and 30th streets.
**Data based on Noe Valley rentals listed by Rent Tech Rentals and Roommates (www.renttech.com).

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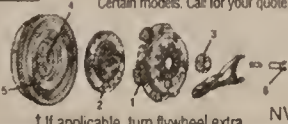
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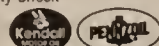
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SHORT TAKES

Library Hosts Poetry Series

The Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library is launching a new poetry series that will be held on one Wednesday night a month. Branch Librarian Roberta Greifer's long-standing interest in poetry was the spark for the series, which kicks off on Wednesday, Dec. 13, with a reading by award-winning poet Kim Addonizio.

Addonizio, a former Noe Valleyan, is the author of three poetry collections, *The Philosopher's Club*, *Jimmy and Rita*, and *Tell Me*, as well as a short story collection titled *In the Box Called Pleasure*. She teaches poetry workshops in San Francisco and Berkeley and co-authored *The Poet's Companion*, a guide to poetry writing. "Virgin Spring," a poem that appears in *Tell Me*, was selected this year for the anthology *Best American Poetry*.

Addonizio has won two NEA fellowships, a Commonwealth Club poetry medal, and a Pushcart Prize. A *San Francisco Chronicle* review dubbed her "Poet Laureate for the Down and Out" and mentioned her "striking looks and get-ups and the dramatically appealing persona she presents at readings."

The second session, on Wednesday, Jan. 24, features two other San Francisco poets. Priscilla Lee is an Asian-American writer whose collection *Wishbone* has just been published. It chronicles the life of a woman straddling two cultures. A recipient of both the Emily Chamberlain Cook Poetry Prize and the James D. Phelan Literary Award, Lee has seen her work published in *Ploughshares*, the *Kenyon Review*, and *Zyzyva* magazine.

Joining Lee on Jan. 24 will be Yvonne Cannon, a Richmond District poet who has published her work in the journal *Confrontation*, the *Santa Clara Review*, and most recently in *Zyzyva*. Cannon describes her poetry as narrative in form, with lots of humor and irony. "It's storytelling, which makes it nice for readings," she adds.

Both sessions will begin at 7:30 p.m. at the library at 451 Jersey St. For more information, call 695-5095.

Works Created by the Disabled

Creativity Explored of San Francisco is holding its annual Holiday Open House and Art Sale, featuring one-of-a-kind art works in a variety of media, including ceramics, paintings, drawings, textiles, sculptures, and assemblages. Creativity Explored is a visual arts studio for adults with developmental disabilities. Some of the artwork that will be on sale has been exhibited nationally and internationally. You can also pick up a 2001 calendar featuring the studio's artworks.

There'll be a preview and reception on Friday, Dec. 1, from 6 to 9 p.m., followed by the sale on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 2 and 3, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. The studio is located at 3245 16th St., between Dolores and Guerrero streets.

For more information, call 863-2108 or email cesf@wenet.net. You can also check out the group's web site at www.creativityexplored.org.

Welcoming Your Child

"When I had my first child, we had a bris for him, but it didn't feel personal enough. So when my second child was born, I wrote a welcoming ceremony for

her." That was the seed for Andrea Alhan Gosline's new book, *Welcoming Ways: Creating Your Baby's Welcome Ceremony with the Wisdom of World Traditions*. Gosline will be signing the book and leading parts of the ceremonies at Natural Resources on Thursday, Dec. 7, at 7 p.m.

If you want to add to your own culture's traditional ceremony, or design a celebration unique to your family, the examples in the book will give you ideas from a variety of cultures, from Borneo to Bali. After a description of each of the welcoming or naming rituals found in these far-flung places, the book includes a sample ceremony written by Gosline.

Parents and their children of all ages are invited to come and participate in the ceremonies. Snacks will be provided. Natural Resources is located at 1307 Castro St., near 24th Street. For more information, call 550-2611.

Value Added Art Show

A new artist series will premiere this month at Value Vacation (formerly Dirt Cheap Travel). Oil paintings by Noe Valley artist Dennis Gardner and works in clay by Noe Valley artist Carol Badran will be shown Thursday through Sunday, Dec. 7-10, with an artists' reception and holiday party on Thursday, Dec. 7, from 5 to 9 p.m.

Value Vacation is located at 3901 23rd St., at Sanchez. For more information, call 824-2550 or visit the travel agency's web site at www.valuevacation.com.

Take a Teddy Bear to Tea

Lovejoy's Tea Room will be offering three Teddy Bear Teas, for children under 10, during the month of December. This special holiday tradition includes storytelling, a special tea menu, and a gift for each child. Children are encouraged to dress up and bring their favorite teddy bear, or other toy.

The teas will be held on Thursday, Dec. 7, at 3:30 p.m.; Friday, Dec. 15, at 6:30 p.m.; and Saturday, Dec. 16, at 10 a.m. Lovejoy's is located at 1351 Church St. Seating is limited, so call for a reservation or more information at 648-5895.

A Santa with Serious Whiskers

Whether your dog has been naughty or nice, you might want to walk him to the Noe Valley Pet Company on Sunday, Dec. 10. That's because "Santa PAWS" will be there to pose for pictures with you and your pet from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The cost for a photo session is \$10 to \$15, and all proceeds will benefit PAWS (Pets Are Wonderful Support), a non-profit organization serving low-income pet owners living with AIDS.

Founded in 1986, PAWS currently helps 350 humans and 650 animals with food deliveries, vet care, dog walking services, litter box maintenance, grooming, and foster care to adoption if needed. During the holidays, PAWS also assembles a gift bag for each client, containing such useful items as toothpaste, toothbrushes, pet shampoo, and toys.

If you wish to support PAWS but lack a furry friend to have your picture taken with, you are welcome to make a donation for the holiday gift bags. Items that would be especially appreciated are new cat toys, dog toys, treats, and money.

The Noe Valley Pet Company is located on Church Street at the corner of Cesar Chavez. To find out more about the event, call 282-7385. To get the scoop on PAWS, call 241-1496 or log on to www.pawssf.org.

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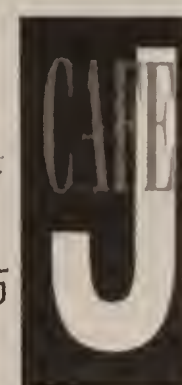
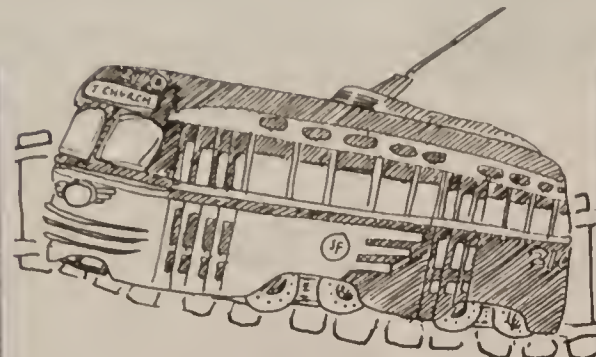
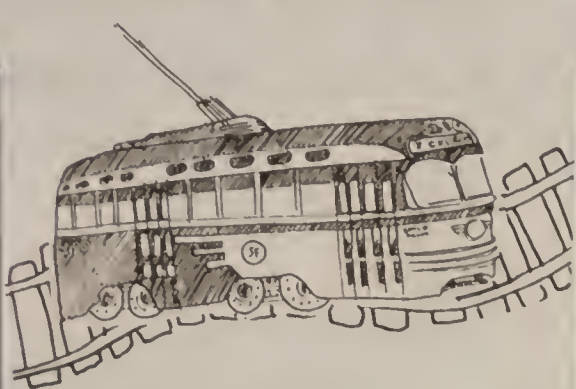
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— Paul Reidinger, *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, November 8, 2000

DINNER MENU

STARTERS

Soup du Jour	\$4.50
Steamed Mussels <i>shallots, parsley, and white wine</i>	\$9.00
Steamed Mussels in Basquaise Sauce <i>sweet and hot red peppers, onions, celery, garlic</i>	\$9.00
Carpaccio <i>capers, julienne beets, chives, grated Parmesan cheese</i>	\$9.00
Fried Calamari	\$5.95

SALADS

Endive Salad <i>apple, Roquefort cheese, balsamic vinaigrette</i>	\$6.50
Spring-Mix Salad <i>balsamic vinaigrette</i>	\$4.25
Cherry Tomato Salad <i>oregano, Champagne vinaigrette, goat cheese</i>	\$5.25

ENTREE SALADS AND SANDWICHES

Classic Caesar	\$6.75
Gene's Favorite <i>mixed lettuces, pancetta, roasted pine nuts, orange segments, poppy-seed dressing</i>	\$7.95
Seafood Salad <i>mussels, clams, red snapper, calamari, roasted fennel, rouille croutons, balsamic vinaigrette</i>	\$9.95
Christian's Big A Cheese Burger <i>with French fries and all the trimmings</i>	\$7.00
Grilled Chicken Sandwich <i>roasted red peppers, balsamic braised onions, watercress garlic aioli, French fries</i>	\$6.95
Seared Tuna Sandwich <i>eggplant, caramelized onions, roasted red peppers, French fries</i>	\$9.50

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Sautéed Red Snapper <i>foie gras citrus sauce, cabbage, spinach and purple Peruvian potato puree</i>	\$14.00
Roasted Chicken Breast <i>garlic mashed potatoes and port citrus sauce</i>	\$11.00
Rack of Lamb <i>potato gratin, green beans, dill and parsley sauce</i>	\$14.00
Pork Tenderloin <i>roasted fennel, white mushrooms, caramelized onions, apples and mustard sauce</i>	\$14.00
Risotto <i>shiitake mushrooms, oyster mushrooms, watercress sauce</i>	\$8.95
Penne Bolognese <i>tomato sauce, ground beef</i>	\$8.95
Bourride (French fish stew) <i>lobster broth, red snapper, prawns, carrot, fingerling potatoes, rouille croutons</i>	\$14.00

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Pariatta (for two) <i>prawns, calamari, clams, mussels, snapper, tomato, cilantro and ginger over risotto</i>	\$28.00
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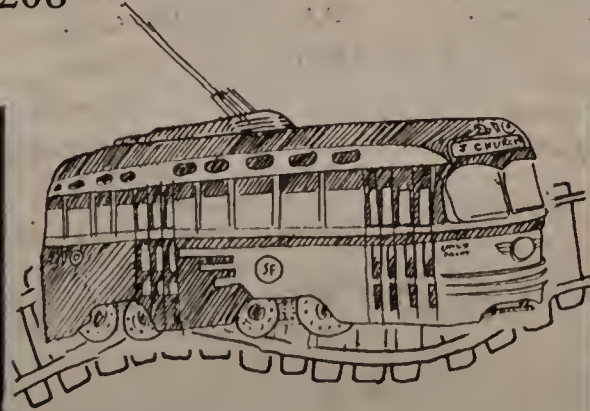
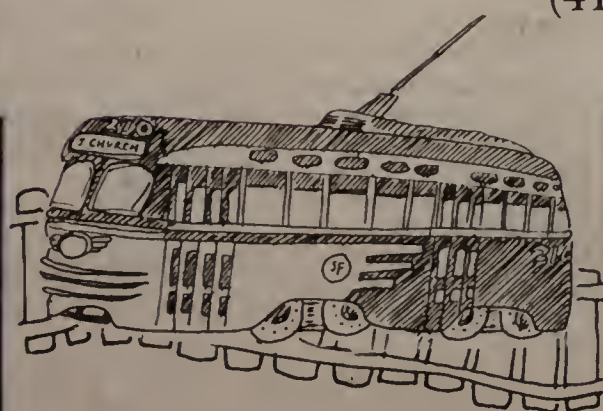
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J Riders Will Take The Bus During Rail Replacement

By Kathleen Mahony

Noe Valley residents who normally ride the J-Church streetcar to and from downtown San Francisco may soon find that their daily commute has a twist to it.

Muni announced in October that starting Nov. 25, it will replace the deteriorating rails on the curvy section of the J-line between 20th and 22nd streets. The project, which is expected to last until Feb. 2, 2001, will also involve repaving the cross streets. During the two months of construction, J-Church riders will switch to buses for the Noe Valley leg of the journey.

The J-line rail replacement is part of a comprehensive program to upgrade aging segments of track and overhead wiring on streetcar lines throughout the city. According to Muni, the upgrade will provide a smoother ride for passengers on the J. It will also reduce breakdowns and delays, as well as noise and disturbance for neighbors along Church Street.

"This rail replacement will go a long way toward reducing the noise and vibration that the new Breda cars make along the tracks," says Muni spokesperson Laura Spanjian. "We received many noise complaints from the neighbors when those new cars came out four years ago, and this will help resolve that problem."

However, Muni's primary goal is to maintain safety, Spanjian says. "Some of the rail is getting really old, and this is one area that has seen a lot of stress in the past few years. We don't want any safety issues, so the rail needs to be replaced."

Construction will take place on weekdays from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. The track between 20th and 22nd—a narrow stretch that winds through the back yards of homes on Church and Chattanooga streets—will be closed to pedestrian access for the length of the project.



During construction, streetcars will travel on only the part of the J-line that heads downtown from Church and Market streets. Buses will be substituted on the rest of the route, from Church and 14th to the end of the line at Balboa Park Station. To minimize inconvenience to J riders, Muni has promised to run the buses 25 percent more often than the streetcars, and at five- to six-minute intervals during rush hour.

Noe Valley commuters traveling outbound from downtown may take any of four Muni Metro lines—an L, K, M, or J—to the Church and Market stop. Then they must exit the train and catch a bus on the southwest corner of 14th at Market (next to the John Frank Restaurant) to continue on the J-line to Noe Valley.

Inbound passengers should board buses at existing stops along Church Street and then transfer to the underground trains at Church and Market, or to J-Church streetcars on the surface of Market Street heading downtown. They can also hop the F-Market historic streetcar on Market at Church.

As word spread last month, Steve Campbell and other regulars on the J began storing up on patience. "It is going to make it difficult to get anywhere, but if it really is going to make things better, you know...you just have to deal with it," Campbell says.

Spanjian understands that some people will be upset about having to transfer from a train to a bus. "But other than that, there is really no reason to [worry]. We have the buses scheduled to run every six minutes, so service should be better or at least comparable to what it was before—there should be no difference in the time of the commute."

What is likely to cause more stress for Noe Valley residents is the project's impact on parking in the neighborhood. During construction, Church Street between 22nd and 23rd streets will be occupied, day and night, by trucks and equipment. The north side of 20th Street between Church and Dolores streets will also have fewer parking spaces available. However, Muni assures residents that parking spots will be freed up as supplies are used by the work crews.

For updates on the rail replacement, call 554-2474 or visit www.sfmuni.com. For service information, call the Muni information line at 673-MUNI (6864). □

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Cranberry Ginger Pound Cake \$10.00

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• Gingerbread men—these make great stocking stuffers or a special treat for any age \$0.75

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The two-bedroom cottage that once stood at 1409 Noe St. (right) is now an empty shell.
Photo and architectural rendering courtesy of Jeff Heuer

Anatomy of a Demolition: The Dust Hasn't Cleared on Noe Street

By Heidi Anderson

The house at 1409 Noe St. is gone. Or rather, it is more gone than it was supposed to be.

Work began in May of this year to renovate the small peak-roofed cottage, which commands a view of Noe Valley and the Bay. Owner Jeff Heuer had obtained a permit to extend the house to the rear, add a garage, and add a one-bedroom apartment in the basement.

But he went too far. On Aug. 15, an inspector from the Building Department responded to two anonymous complaints that the house had been demolished. When he visited the site, he found that two walls, the house's façade, and the first floor had been removed. These elements of the 87-year-old house were supposed to be preserved during the renovation.

But when the dust settled, there was no *there* there. The cottage had disappeared.

Now three months later, the question remains: Has Noe Valley fallen victim to yet another developer's arrogance? Or was the demolition of 1409 Noe simply the result of the owner's poor judgment?

Owner Testifies at Hearing

"I have lived at 1409 Noe for two years, and I began this renovation with every intent to keep the building intact," said Heuer at an October hearing at the Department of Building Inspection.

Heuer, who earns his living in construction, described how he and his friends demolished some of the interior walls by hand in order to spare other parts of the house.

"Early on, the side walls [the ones touching neighboring houses] and façade were still intact," he testified.

But when he inspected the walls more carefully, he found extensive dry rot. He also discovered that the floor lacked sufficient reinforcement to be safe under today's building codes. In his mind, there was no point in saving a house that was falling apart. So he took out the walls and floor.

A few weeks later at the site, Heuer elaborated on his decision.

He explained that he'd made a mistake in reading the blueprints approved by the Planning Department. He interpreted the words "New or Existing," printed next to the walls in question on his plans, as meaning that it didn't matter whether the renovated building used the original walls or newly built ones.

But he also thought he had received verbal permission from the Building Department to do the work. In June, a month after the renovation began, an inspector visited the house at Heuer's request. The inspector was shown the dry rot and other

structural problems.

Heuer's father was there, as was the general contractor, but not Heuer himself. According to Heuer, an informal conversation at that inspection led Heuer's father to believe that it would be okay to remove the deteriorated flooring and walls.

"If I really was trying to screw with the plans and not have the neighbors know, I would have left the façade up to try hiding the work," Heuer said. "I didn't."

In fact, the main reason he went ahead was so he could stick to the timetable he'd promised his neighbors, he said. "I could have 'sistered' in reinforcements to the floor [i.e., shored up existing materials], but it would have cost a lot more and taken a lot longer."

He'd already spent months negotiating with the neighbors over roof height, the overall design, his work hours, even where the Port-o-San would be located.

"Of course, I wanted to get this work done on time, but my neighbors did, too," Heuer said.

Upper Noe Sends a Watchdog

Three of those neighbors testified at the Oct. 23 hearing. Two spoke in support of Heuer. One was not sympathetic to Heuer's plight.

Georgia Schuttish lives half a block away on Duncan Street. She said that her proximity to 1409 Noe entitled her to official notification by mail of Heuer's renovation work. She claimed she did not receive the proper notice.

She also said she was attending on behalf of the group Upper Noe Neighbors, which has been vigilant lately about a spate of demolitions taking place in Noe Valley. They fear that each time a small Victorian bites the dust, a "monster home" may rear up in its place.

"Upper Noe Neighbors is upset about this trend," said Schuttish. "First of all, something is wrong with the code if he [Heuer] is able to leave only three walls standing and that isn't called a demolition. But I'm glad he got called in when he took them down."

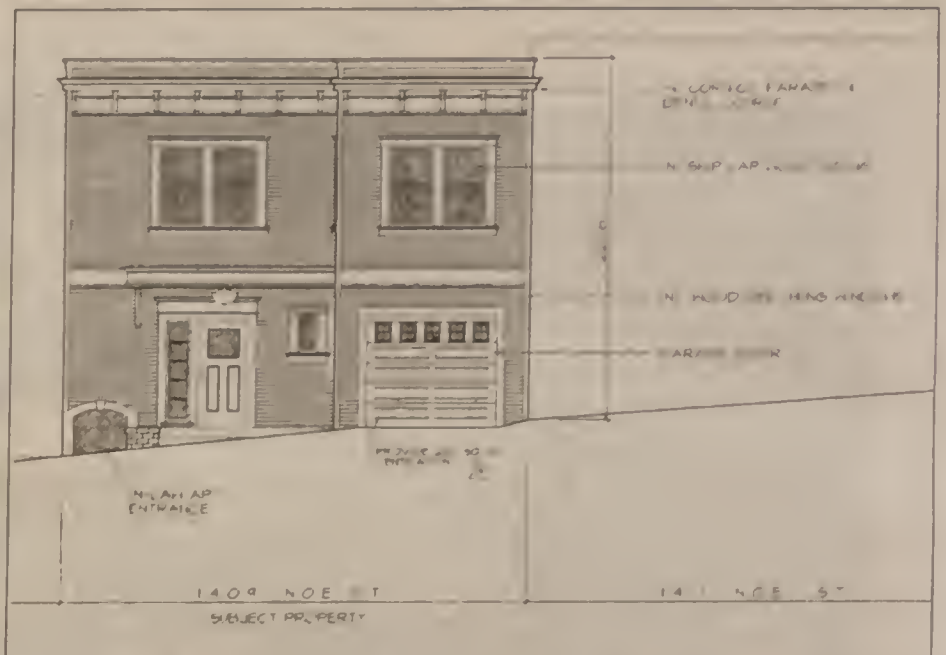
The only other complaint submitted at the hearing was a letter sent to the Chief Building Inspector a week before the hearing. The writer, who neither claimed to be a neighbor nor provided legible identification, argued that Heuer pretended not to know he needed a permit to do the new work on the house.

Heuer responded that his dealings with neighbors had been in good faith and he had spent a year and half gaining his permits. He also said he planned to live in the house once it was remodeled. The last thing he wanted to do was to alienate the neighbors.

Two Neighbors Express Support

Donald Bardole owns and lives in the house next door, at 1407 Noe. He also spoke at the hearing.

"I basically support the plan," said Bardole. "My interest is that the house next to mine be earthquake-proofed and up to



This architect's drawing shows how Jeff Heuer would like his property on Noe Street to look, assuming the city allows him to proceed with his renovation.

fire codes. Plus, I'm pleased the design of the renovated house is consistent with the neighborhood." He pointed out that the roof height—22 feet—matched his.

Bardole also said he wanted to corroborate Heuer's testimony about how carefully he worked on his plans for the house.

"No machine went into that house during the first month. I overheard conversations they had as they worked, and I knew a lot of thought went into what they were doing," Bardole said.

He said he hoped the work would be allowed to continue.

His neighbor across the street, Alan Louie of 1418 Noe, added his words of praise. "He [Heuer] consulted us many times. I told him my greatest concern was the height of the house," Louie said.

Heuer could have built his renovated home higher. (The legal limit is 40 feet.) But, after consulting with Louie, he decided not to. "For this I am grateful," Louie said.

What Happens Next

Regarding the site visit in June, Rich Rovetti, public information director for the Building Inspection Department, says that informal visits to building sites are often made by inspectors when an owner or general contractor requests it.

But Rovetti claims there is no way Heuer received verbal permission to do the disputed work.

"A revision request should have been made [by Heuer], depending on the amount or kind of work that needed to be done." It would not have been unusual, he says, for a permit to be issued. And taking the time to get it would have kept Heuer out of trouble.

Rovetti says he is not familiar with the details of what transpired at 1409 Noe, but he assumes neighbors should have been notified of the intent to remove the floor and walls.

Meanwhile, Hearing Director David O'Sullivan of the Department of Public Works was scheduled to decide on the entire matter by Nov. 20 (after the *Voice* went to press).

Heuer may be allowed to continue the work he has begun, or he may be ordered to rebuild the house he demolished. If he loses his case, he could also be barred from obtaining other construction permits at that site for up to five years.

Whatever O'Sullivan's decision, it will be subject to appeal.

'I'm Young and Stupid'

As he awaited the verdict, Heuer reflected upon his situation. "If anything, this all happened because I'm young and stupid."

Heuer is 32 and grew up in New Jersey. He says he moved to San Francisco a few years ago and took a dot-com job that dealt with construction. The job didn't pan out, so he began picking up traditional odd jobs. Once he decided to put down roots in San Francisco, he bought the house at 1409 Noe St. Since then, hardly a day has gone by that he hasn't thought about his home remodeling project.

"I grew up around construction all my life, but I'm new to San Francisco and sort of new to renovation. It's been a tough learning curve," he says. "It took me a year and a half to get through Planning and Zoning—this is not the first hassle I've had [on 1409 Noe]."

He says he is deep in debt for both the mortgage and the construction loan. He has been sleeping on a friend's couch during the renovation.

But he concludes, "I'll never give up on this. I've got my whole life wrapped up in it." □

For an update on 1409 Noe, contact Senior Building Inspector Andrew Greene at 558-6093



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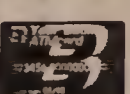
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Looking for Toyland on 24th Street

By Alison Pence

If you are like me, the last thing you want to do this time of year is drive to the mall or fight the crowds at Toys 'R' Us. But neither do you want to do your shopping in the glow of a computer screen.

I know, I know, we're supposed to give up shopping altogether—to save the world from crass commercialism. But I have a 3-year-old son. He's heard the news: Santa Claus is coming to town.

Besides, I like toys, too. So, to see if I could do my shopping on foot, while at the same time supporting the local stores, I ran out to do a quick survey of 24th Street.

Believe it or not, most of our shops have gift items for kids. (They don't call us Stroller Valley for nothing.) There are so many toys, in fact, it was difficult to cull a selection to feature here.

Still, I have tried to pick stuff that anyone—from toddlers to preteens—would enjoy. I also prefer toys that kids have to use their hands or heads to play with.

I admit I had some help from an expert toy tester. I took my son with me on assignment, and this is what we learned.

Noah's Workshop

Our first stop was **The Ark** (3845 24th St.; 821-1257), the only store in Downtown Noe Valley devoted exclusively to toys. The Ark has many creative and amazing playthings. And co-owners Ringo Palencia and Pam Byers have been busy little elves this season.

This year Palencia and Byers are excited about their Puzzle World collection, 3-D modular "systems" by Melissa & Doug. "They [Melissa and Doug] are the sweetest people," says Byers. "She called me 10 years ago, and I bought their first puzzles. I feel like she's my good friend."

Made of wood covered with laminated paper, the puzzles can be assembled to



At the Ark on 24th at Vicksburg Street, 10-year-old Brenna Stanton got close to some toys she'd like to find under her Christmas tree.
Photo by Pamela Gerard

create towns or landscapes dotted with houses, office buildings, cars, trees—you name it. There are also planes and helicopters, and a harbor featuring a submarine, ferry, crane, and drawbridge. Some sets have Brio-compatible tracks, and the Puzzle World trains, cars, and trucks come with magnetic couplers. The Tunnel Loop, a good starter set, is \$29.99. The store has a great display for you to kid-test. (My son, a regular at the shop, did not miss the Ark's old train table one bit and really liked this new one.)

For older builders (7 and up), there are Anatomics construct-your-own animals, dinosaurs, and other creatures, starting at \$7.95. The Masterbug set lets you create four different bugs, and is \$14.99. White Wings gliders and aircraft are also popular with advanced modelers. These planes are based on real planes, so they are technically true and long-flying. One box has six planes, \$12.

The Ark also has a wide selection of dress-up clothing, including tutus, wizard hats, and feather boas (\$12.95). A beginner sewing kit with six felt hand puppets is \$12.95, and a Paint-Your-Own tea set by B.C. Clayworks is \$21.95.

Up the street at **Wavy Footprints** (3961 24th St., 285-3668), a kids shoe store, one can find whimsical socks, slippers, and rain boots that won't bust your budget. Socks with squirrels and raccoons, race cars, or appliquéd flowers range from \$3.50 to \$6. Other accessories include hair clips with handmade roses by Leisa from \$6, and organza headbands from Head Dress for \$5.

Susan Lytle, co-owner of the store, sold me on her finger puppets from the Netherlands. She has a horse, elephant, and purple bunnies for \$6. She also has a hand puppet with its own finger puppet for \$20.

At **Little Bean Sprouts** next door (3961 24th St.; 550-1668), you will find a sale on all merchandise through December. (Come January, the store will be closed for a couple of weeks for remodeling.) Little Bean Sprouts has books and toys for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. While I was in, the shop had a sale on activity kits that included tools, supplies, and a how-to book for \$12.95. There was a modeling clay kit and a sand painting kit, both of which looked good.

At **Just for Fun** (3982 24th St.; 285-4068), children in tow will be amused

for as long as you want them to be by the moving figurines and snow scenes at the front of the store. You'll just have to tie them in the stroller so they won't touch. Give them a gumball from the machine and listen to it play a holiday tune. Just for Fun has a good selection of nostalgia toys—patent medicine for kids of all ages.

John Hundt, the employee who showed me around, said, "These were great toys when we were kids." "Oh no," I told him, "I'm *much* too young for those tin toys." But board games like Operation and Chutes and Ladders, and Mr. Potato Head, Barbie, and Battleship I remember well. Or how about Ant Farm, Barrel of Monkeys, or Sea Monkeys? My personal favorite was Auto Bingo, the game with the little windows you slide every time you see a cow, police car, or tractor.

Young children might like a foam puzzle book, from Innovative Kids, for about \$10. The foam cutouts are soft and textured and give the books a nice, well, chewable quality. I also gravitated toward the old-fashioned jump ropes. The ones at Just for Fun, \$6.95 from House of Marbles, have handpainted wooden handles. For older kids, there are model kits by Rapid Kit, enabling you to make insects or machines for \$13.95. Craft kits, science kits, and all sorts of games are well represented in this store. If your "child" has four legs, be sure to let Hundt know; he has treats behind the counter for you.

Groovy Girls, Umbrellas with Ears

By now, of course, my son is deconstructing on the sidewalk, and people are looking at me strangely and congratulating themselves on getting a dog. So we step into **Small Frys** (4066 24th St.; 648-3954) to use the bathroom. The store also provides a nursing/dressing room. "We call it the changing room," says owner Carol Yenne, "because it has a changing table."

In addition, there is a small activity area for kids, so I sit for a minute and maniacally hammer at a blue ball, which my son is happy to chase after and return. I

Continued on Next Page



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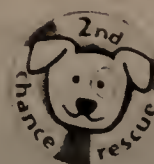
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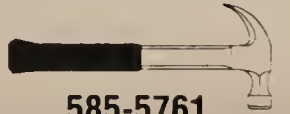


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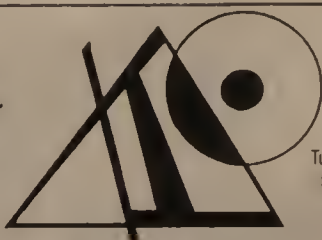
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The Adventures Of Toy Trek

Continued from Previous Page

compliment him on his fetching skills, and we return to our task.

Predominantly a clothing store for children, Small Frys also carries a select number of toys. This season the shop is touting the Groovy Girl. Groovy Girls and Boys are ethnically diverse, machine-washable rag dolls that come in three sizes. The supersize is 40 inches tall and has straps on her feet so that she can be a child's dance partner. The medium-size doll is 13 inches and at \$10.95 is very reasonable. (The third size is a finger puppet.)

One thing that caught my eye was a toy theater for \$29.95 from Manhattan Toy. This is a portable puppet playhouse complete with velvet curtains. Separate puppets range from \$4 to \$6. Another portable play set at Small Frys is a circus, from Awesome Kids. It comes in a box the size of a makeup case, and features a play mat, trapeze artists, clowns, and animals, for \$19.95. I almost bought one on the spot. There is also a Medieval Times play set and a beading kit in this series.

"Don't forget to tell everyone we still have Beanie Babies," Yenne said as I was leaving. "They have come out with the zodiac, and they are still only \$5.95." They are cute with their little metallic hooves and fantasy fur.

Next, we went into Peek-a-Bootique (1306 Castro St.; 641-6192), because you never know what treasures you will find on the gently-used toy shelf. I immediately saw some Lincoln Logs and two erector sets. I also perused the used book shelf for favorite titles. Among the new toys, Peek-a-Bootique has Papa Don's magnet cars for \$14.95. Made of wood, with removable drivers, these cars look like a lot of fun. One pack has six cars.

A selection of Bathtime stickers, which stick to the side of the tub, includes sea creatures, construction workers, or dress-up dolls for \$3.25. For infants, I love the black and white Stim-Mobile by Wimmer-Ferguson, \$18.95. For \$9.95, you can buy an umbrella with ears. Ladybug, butterfly, cat, or bumblebee designs are also available, matching boots extra.



Up at 24th and Diamond, Juan Teran, owner of Artemisia, has some hand-carved animals that would make unique gifts.
Photo by Pamela Gerard

It's the Little Things

Need stocking stuffers? Presents for Chanukah or Kwanzaa? We have many neighborhood stores with little items that can go a long way toward entertaining a child. Small toys make good traveling companions and are fun to have in a pocket for trips to the park or the laundromat.

At the bath shop **Common Scents** (3920 24th St.; 826-1019), there are tiny boats and small rubber fish and whales for 70 cents apiece. **Paper Plus** (1309 Castro St.; 643-9954) also has a good selection of stickers and small rubber toys.

Colorcrane (3957 24th St.; 285-1387) has a pen that sings 16 different melodies. The shop has loads of art supplies, including peel-off window paint (\$5.50) and all things Crayola. My favorite for traveling is Model Magic, \$4.99. This incredible clay does not shred or make a mess and is great to have on an airplane. Colorcrane has tattoos and stickers, blank puzzles for 99 cents, and letter beads for personalized bracelets (45 cents a bead).

The Global Marketplace

If you're looking for a gift that is hand-made, check out **Global Exchange** (4018 24th St.; 648-8068). The shop has stuffed dolls and animals in vivid colors and many brightly colored wood objects. There are bookshelves and other wall decorations, as well as a "How Tall Am

popular and start at \$8. Hand-carved maracas start at \$4. Juan Teran, the owner, is on his way back from Mexico right now, with more items for this season's shoppers. His Christmas decorations include charming creche scenes and lots of tin painted ornaments.

Spend Some Time

If you're interested in spending something other than money, how about spending some time? You and your youngster can paint a pot together at Terra Mia (4037 24th St.; 642-9911) or have ice cream at Fountain of Youth (1484 Church St.; 206-9411), tea at Lovejoy's (1351 Church St.; 648-5895), or hot chocolate almost anywhere. Build some memories with your favorite little person.

Well, that about wraps it up. Have fun on your store trek. My son was very good (two lollipops and a bagel's worth). I am going home for my nap.



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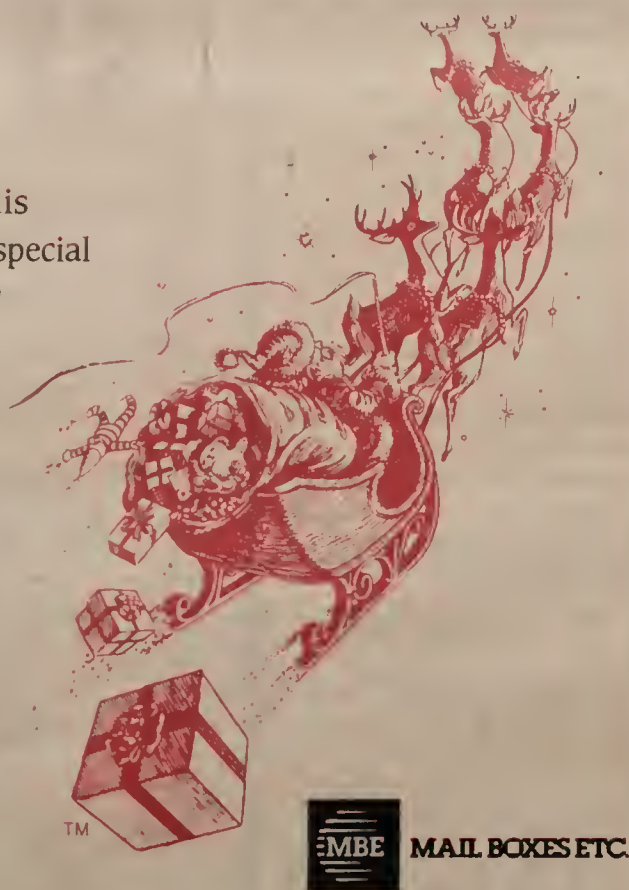
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Noe Valley's Friend, Harry Stern, Dies at 70

By Sally Smith

Noe Valley has lost one of its champions. Harry Stern, a 16-year resident and longtime activist in Friends of Noe Valley, died Oct. 31, of complications stemming from lung cancer. He was 70.

During his rich, full life, Stern walked down many roads. In his last year alone, he was newsletter editor and co-president of Friends, a representative to the Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods, an active member of the Noe Valley Democratic Club, a volunteer for Project Read, and a member of a city agency set up to keep an eye on Muni.

"Harry stood for all the good things that a neighborhood person is supposed to stand for," said Claire Pilcher, a founding member of Friends. "He was a great watchdog for us at the Board of Supervisors. He'd go down to City Hall, speak at the hearings, keep track of legislation—all good contributions."

What's more, said Democratic Club President Dave Monks, Stern had great rapport with friends, family, and colleagues.

"Harry's passing is a real loss to our neighborhood. He was an elder and a teacher about how the city works, and he passed on a lot of that information to those who are newer to the city," Monks said. "He also had a wonderful, warm, gentle demeanor. He was a great guy."

Harold H. Stern was born in 1930 in Tübingen, Germany. When he was 9, his family emigrated to the United States, landing at Ellis Island, N.Y. He spent the rest of his youth living and going to school in Manhattan ("That's the only part of New York there is," he used to say), eventually obtaining an engineering degree from City College of New York.

In 1958, he moved to San Lorenzo, Calif., and took a job as a mechanical engineer for Lawrence Livermore Labs. It was there that he met and married Gloria Morgan, with whom he maintained a close friendship all his life. "We liked to joke that we'd been married for nine years, but happily divorced for 28. He was really my very best friend," said Morgan, who came from her home in Livermore, Calif., to take care of Stern during the final days of his illness.

The couple were married from 1963 to 1972, and during that time Stern became



The neighborhood will miss its top lobbyist at City Hall, Harry Stern, who died Oct. 31 at the age of 70. Photo by Beverly Thorp

a father to Morgan's children from a previous marriage. "He was the only father my children ever had. He was wonderful to them," Morgan said.

Stern stayed at Lawrence Livermore until 1961, and Morgan now wonders whether his exposure to beryllium dust at the Labs may have triggered his lung cancer. "He never smoked a day in his life," she said. "My children are just devastated that he's gone."

From the 1960s through the '90s, Stern continued to pursue a career as an industrial or "human factors" engineer. He worked for Ford Aerospace and later LORAL, Inc., of Palo Alto, retiring about five years ago. He moved to San Francisco in 1978, and was married and divorced again in the early '80s.

In 1984, Stern moved into his house on 25th Street in Noe Valley. Within no time, he was striding up and down the hills, going to the theater and the symphony, and trying out all the new restaurants in town.

"He especially loved good restaurants. He considered himself a 'foodie,'" said Morgan. "He also loved to walk," she added. "He did the Bay to Breakers five times!"

Eunice Rosenberg, who got to know Stern through Friends of Noe Valley, was one of his walking buddies. "He and Claire [Pilcher] and I used to walk around together on weekday mornings, up to Portola, down to 30th and Church, all over," said Rosenberg. "He loved the neighborhood and had a lot of enthusiasm for daily living. He also had a wonderful sense of humor and an enormous interest in many things—art, architecture, figuring out how to fix Muni," she said.

As an active member of Rescue Muni, Stern was constantly tinkering with ways to get people out of their cars and onto public transit. One of his dreams was to have small shuttlebuses or minivans running loops throughout the neighborhood.

He also practiced what he preached. "He rode Muni all the time. He didn't just talk about it. He did it," Morgan said.

Stern's strong opinions often made their way into the *Voice*. In 1997, he spoke out against the proliferation of restaurant chains in Noe Valley. He also fought to preserve the 84-year-old Carnegie library on Jersey Street, and mediated the debate over cell phone antennas in the steeple at the Noe Valley Ministry. In 1998, he voiced his concern about the Planning Department's alleged bias in favor of developers.

In early 1999, at the age of 68, he took a sabbatical from all this activism and spent five months in Paris, studying French and visiting art treasures.

Later that year, he returned to his role as newsletter editor of the Friends. Soon he was elected co-president with Jean Amos, and appointed by Supervisor Mark Leno to a citizens advisory board watching over Muni.

Then in February of 2000, his doctors discovered a lesion on his lung. Over the next six months, the cancer spread to his bones, then to his brain.

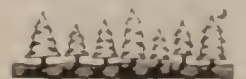
During his last weeks, he was fortunate

to be able to be in his own home and getting extra assistance from Coming Home Hospice on Diamond Street. "The hospice nurses were wonderful, coming every day," said Morgan. He died peacefully on Halloween night.

On Nov. 5, friends and family held a service at Sinai Memorial Chapel, attended by many of the people whose lives Stern had touched. Supervisor Leno was there. "It was a very moving ceremony," said Rosenberg. People remembered "what a kind and loving person Harry was."

They also talked about his zest for doing and learning. "It's hard to believe that a little over a year ago, Harry was in Paris, studying French. He was planning to go to Florence and study Italian this year. He was really looking forward to that."

In addition to Gloria Morgan, Stern is survived by his second wife, Laura Shumay of San Jose; his children Lynda, Ronald, and Thomas Morgan; his grandchildren Samantha and Robert; and great-granddaughter Ashley. The family suggests that if people would like to make a donation in Harry Stern's name, they send it to Coming Home Hospice, 115 Diamond St., San Francisco, CA 94114, or to the American Cancer Society. □



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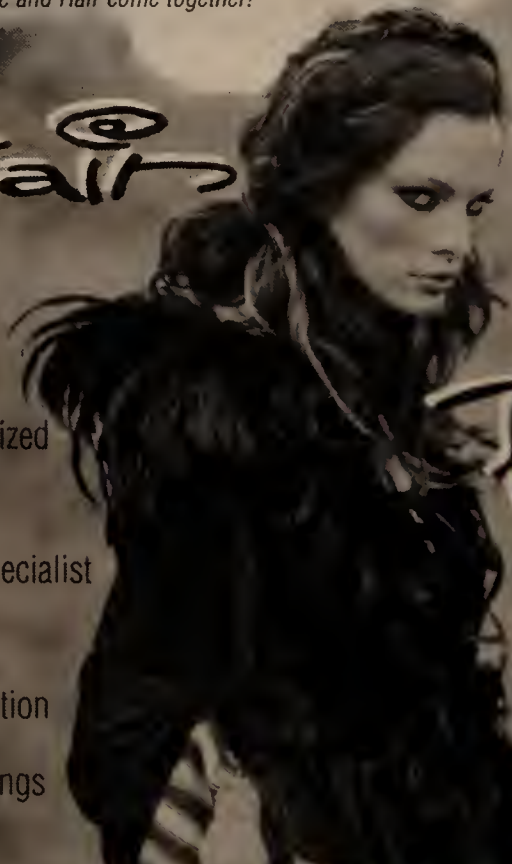
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DEC. 1: KITKA performs a holiday concert of Eastern European music, "Wintersongs." 8 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 444-0323.

DEC. 1: Performance artist FRANK MOORE, as "The Passions' Conductor," plans to "weave an erotic trance state based on whoever enters his shaman's cave." 8 pm-2 am. Build, 483 Guerrero St. (510) 526-7858.

DEC. 1-10: Goat Hall Productions performs Benjamin Britten's OPERA for all ages, *The Little Sweep*. Fri. and Sat., 8 pm; Sun., 2 pm. Goat Hall, 400 Missouri St. 289-6877.

DEC. 1-10: ODC DANCE Company performs *The Velveteen Rabbit*, narrated by Geoff Hoyle, for ages 4 and up. Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Theater, 700 Howard St. Call 978-2787 for times.

DEC. 2: The San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners offers a workshop in making low-cost HOLIDAY GIFTS from materials gathered in the garden. 10 am-noon. Garden for the Environment, 7th Ave. at Lawton St. 285-7584.

DEC. 2: The HOLIDAY SHOW by Art-Fusion cooperative features handcrafted works of art for body and home. 10 am-6 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 282-2317.

DEC. 2: A holiday CRAFTS FAIR features the handmade wearable, practical, and/or edible work of 30 craftspeople, 10 am-5 pm. The Young People's Teen Musical Theater performs *A Tribute to Charles Schulz* at 2 pm. Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way. 554-9600.

DEC. 2: An OPEN HOUSE at Synergy School offers prospective students and their parents a chance to meet the teachers and see the facilities. 11 am-2 pm. 1387 Valencia St. 567-6177.

DEC. 2: A Faux Fur FASHION SHOW, hosted by Jeffrey Weeks, benefits Pets Are Wonderful Support (PAWS). 8-11 pm. SomArts, 934 Brannan St. 241-1460.

DEC. 2: BLUES MUSICIAN and Tuvan-style throat singer Paul Pena performs with his band at 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

DEC. 2 & 3: A CHRISTMAS BOUTIQUE at St. Philip's Church features crafts, gifts, and baked goods. Sat., 4-7 pm; Sun., 10 am-1 pm. 725 Diamond St. 282-0141.

DEC. 2 & 3: Creativity Explored's holiday open house and ART SALE offers unique work by adults with developmental disabilities. 11 am-4 pm. 3245 16th St. 863-2108.

DEC. 3: An Ayurvedic VEGETARIAN COOKING class uses the tridosa and a holiday season menu. 11 am-2 pm. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St. 821-1117.

DEC. 3: The Ferrara/Leisek Duo performs GUITAR works by Piazzolla, Gismondi, Carlos Jobim, and Sergio Assad. 4 pm. Noe Valley Chamber Music at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 333-9444.

DEC. 3: The first ADOPT-A-PUPPY event, co-sponsored with Second Chance Rescue, offers an opportunity to spend the holidays with a new best friend. 1-4 pm. Noe Valley Pet Company, 1451 Church St. 282-7385 or SCR at 721-1721.

DEC. 3: The annual Winter HOLIDAY SALE at Sharon Art Studio features handcrafted pottery, jewelry, and glass artwork. 11 am-5 pm. Golden Gate Park, next to the children's playground and carousel. 753-7006.



Guitarists Tom Leisek (left) and Lawrence Ferrara play for the Noe Valley Chamber Music Series Dec. 3.

DEC. 3-JAN. 5: The paintings of JONNIE VANCE are on display in a one-woman show, "Sleight of Hand." Reception Dec. 9, 3-5 pm. Gallery Sanchez at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 282-2317.

DEC. 4-7: The Associated Students' HOLIDAY ARTS and Crafts Fair at S.F. State features more than 40 vendors. 9 am-7 pm. Student Center, 1650 Halloway Ave. 338-2444.

DEC. 4, 11 & 18: Staci Boden leads three "Baby Spirit" classes: "Becoming a Family" on Dec. 4, "Pregnancy Life Lessons" on Dec. 11, and "CONSCIOUS PARENTING" on Dec. 18. 7-9 pm. Natural Resources, 1307 Castro St. 550-2611.

DEC. 5: Bird and Beckett Books and Records hosts a BAROIC ROUND-TABLE, with open discussion and a poetry reading. 7:30 pm. 2788 Diamond St. 586-3733.

DEC. 5: Beth Custer Oofia Luz 30 Besos performs two sets of IMPROVISATIONAL MUSIC at Bruno's. 9:30 and 11 pm. 2389 Mission St. 648-7600.

DEC. 5, 9, 10 & 12: The Golden Gate MEN'S CHORUS performs "Candlelight Concerts." 8 pm; Sun. 3 pm. St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, 3281 16th St. 668-GGMC.

DEC. 5 & 19: Preschool STORY TIME, a read-aloud program for children ages 3 to 5, begins at 10 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

DEC. 6: In "AROMATHERAPY: An Aromatic Guided Tour," Julia Fischer discusses the use of various scents. 7-9 pm. Scarlet Sage Herb Co. 1173 Valencia St. Call 821-0997 to register.

DEC. 7: Local author ANDREA ALBAN GOSLINE will sign her new book, *Welcoming Ways: Creating Your Baby's Welcome Ceremony with the Wisdom of World Traditions*. 7 pm. Natural Resources, 1307 Castro St. 550-2611.

DEC. 7: Modern Times Bookstore hosts readings from *Word of Mouth: An Anthology of GAY AMERICAN POETRY*, written over the past half-century. 7 pm. 888 Valencia St. 282-9246.

DEC. 7-10: OIL PAINTINGS by Dennis Gardner and clay works by Carol Badran are on display at Value Vacation. Reception and holiday party, Dec. 7, 5-9 pm. Gallery hours 11 am-6 pm. 3901 23rd St. 824-2550.

DEC. 7, 15 & 16: TEOOY BEAR TEAS are a holiday treat at Lovejoy's for children under 10 years. Dec. 7, 3:30 pm; Dec. 15, 6:30 pm; Dec. 16, 10 am. 1351 Church St. Seating is limited; call for a reservation at 648-5895.

DEC. 8: The Noe Valley Music Series hosts a CONCERT by Virgil Shaw, Sonny Smith, and Caroleen Beatty. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

DEC. 8 & 9: A HOLIDAY HEALING FAIR features gift ideas, psychic readings, crystals, massage, and New Year's Feng Shui. Noon-5 pm. Array of Light, 4291 24th St. 642-9249.

DEC. 9: "Know the Law: TENANTS' RIGHTS," a lecture by Ora Prochovnik of the New College Housing Clinic is sponsored by the Coalition of Concerned Legal Professionals. 11 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

DEC. 9: ELLEN BONEPARTH signs her new book, *Death at the Olive Press*. 2-3 pm. S.F. Mystery Bookstore, 4175 24th St. 282-7444.

DEC. 10: SANTA PAWS will pose for photos with pets, to benefit PAWS. 10 am-1 pm. Noe Valley Pet Company, 1451 Church St. 282-7385.



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Reservations Suggested

Calendar



DEC. 10: An OPEN HOUSE at Brown Chiropractic offers a chance to meet Dr. Covey and view the facilities. 11 am–2:30 pm. 1404 Church St. 642-7536.

DEC. 10: Daphne Miller, M.D., introduces her new family practice with an OPEN HOUSE; cookies and tea will be served. 11 am–4 pm. 1448 Church St. 642-0333.

DEC. 10: "A DICKENS of a Christmas" features an English tea at 5 pm, followed by dramatic readings from *A Christmas Carol* and seasonal music, beginning at 7 pm. Bethany Methodist Church, 1268 Sanchez St. 647-8393.

DEC. 12: Your VOTE counts in the District 8 runoff between Eileen Hansen and Mark Leno—just be sure to punch the chad all the way through! For information, call the Department of Elections at 554-4411.

DEC. 12: Preschoolers 3 to 5 can enjoy FILMS picked just for them at 10 and 11 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

DEC. 12: St. Luke's Hospital holds a VOLUNTEER orientation, for people who'd like to work with patients or offer clerical help. 3 to 5 pm. St. Luke's Hospital, 3555 Cesar Chavez St. 641-6538.

DEC. 13: A poetry reading by KIM ADDONIZIO, author of *Tell Me*, a National Book Award finalist, begins at 7:30 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

DEC. 13: JOSEPH SUTTON reads from his new novel, *Morning Pages*. 7:30 pm. Bird and Beckett Books and Records, 2788 Diamond St. 586-3733.

DEC. 15: J.P. ORBIT and Hot Buttered Rum perform original jazz, soul, groove, and bluegrass. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 282-5149.

DEC. 16: SANTA will be on 24th Street, along with various sidewalk sales to help your Christmas shopping, sponsored by the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association. 10 am–3 pm.

DEC. 16: The annual HOLIDAY POTLUCK at the monthly meeting of the Older Women's League (OWL) also features board member elections. 10:30 am–12:15 pm. Call 989-4422 for location and information.

DEC. 16: Bake a batch of Christmas COOKIES with your neighbors, then go Christmas caroling around the neighborhood. 4 pm. Bethany United Methodist Church, 1268 Sanchez St. 647-8393.

DEC. 16: A HANUKKAH CONCERT celebration features Davka and monologist Josh Kornbluth. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

DEC. 16 & 17: The Winter Solstice CRAFTS FAIRE features original and unusual work, including items created by the Youth Enterprise and Arts Coalition. 10 am–6 pm. Cellspace, 2050 Bryant St. 648-7562.

DEC. 17: A children's holiday party features *Amahl and the Night Visitors* performed by the Ina Chalis Ensemble, refreshments, and a visit from Santa Claus. 11:30 am–1 pm. Community Music Center, 544 Capp St. 647-6015.

DEC. 17: St. Philip's Church Choir and CHAMBER ORCHESTRA perform "A Christmas Promise" at 7 pm. 725 Diamond St. 282-0141.

DEC. 21: Array of Light hosts a celebration of the WINTER SOLSTICE. 7–9 pm. 4291 24th St. 642-9249.

DEC. 21: SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE hosts a winter solstice party; free admission for spectators. 7:45 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 333-9372.

DEC. 22: Lovejoy's Tea Room hosts a winter solstice TEA at 7 pm. 1351 Church St. Seating is limited; call for reservations, 648-5895.



Davka will perform a Hanukkah concert, and Josh Kornbluth will emcee for the Noe Valley Music Series Dec. 16.

DEC. 23: The Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association has invited strolling CHRISTMAS CAROLERS to bring seasonal song to 24th Street. 10 am–3 pm.

DEC. 25: A CHRISTMAS DAY worship service and community brunch will be co-sponsored by Dolores Street Baptist Church. 11 am. Bethany United Methodist Church, 1268 Sanchez St. 647-8393.

DEC. 31: A NEW YEAR'S EVE ecumenical service at Integral Yoga Institute offers a service honoring all major world spiritual traditions, followed by chanting and meditation. Small dinner, 7:30 pm, program 8:30–midnight. 770 Dolores St. 821-1117.

JAN. 4 & 9: Live Oak School offers two OPEN HOUSE events, for the middle school on Jan. 4 and the elementary school on Jan. 9. 7 pm. 117 Diamond St. 861-8840.

JAN. 6: RAMBLIN' JACK ELLIOTT performs at 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

JAN. 11: The San Francisco School holds an OPEN HOUSE tour and presentation for middle schoolers (grades 6 through 8). 7–8:30 pm. 300 Gaven St. 239-5065.

JAN. 11–25: A creative momentum WORKSHOP offers new strategies to sustain inspiration. Thursdays, 7 to 9:30 pm. Array of Light, 4291 24th St. 642-9249.

JAN. 12: David Hykes and Dennis Lewis perform a CONCERT at the Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry. 8:15 pm. 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

JAN. 13: The Manning/Kassin/Darter trio's improvisational and eclectic MUSIC will be recorded live at this performance. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

JAN. 19 & 20: BOX SET DUO performs at 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

Calendar Space Odyssey 2001

The Noe Valley Voice staff will be snoozing in deep space through Millennium II and the inauguration, so don't expect to see us until our February 2001 issue hits the stands on Feb. 2. (The paper is on vacation for the month of January.) However, if you have a Valentine's Day or other event to publicize, please mail in your notice by **Jan. 15**. Send it to the Noe Valley Voice Calendar, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Or email zabarska@aol.com. Questions? Call Karol at 285-6347.

JAN. 21: Noe Valley Chamber Music presents a COMPOSER'S FORUM at 4 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 333-9444.

JAN. 21: SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE classes teach jigs, reels, and strathspeys. 6 pm. UCSF Milberry Fitness Center, 333-9372.

JAN. 24: The Noe Valley Library hosts a POETRY READING with Priscilla Lee and Yvonne Cannon. 7:30 pm. 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

JAN. 26: The Noe Valley Music Series presents a concert by folk star JESSE WINCHESTER. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

JAN. 31: AROMATHERAPY for babies and toddlers is taught by Cary and Johanna Friedman. 7:30 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

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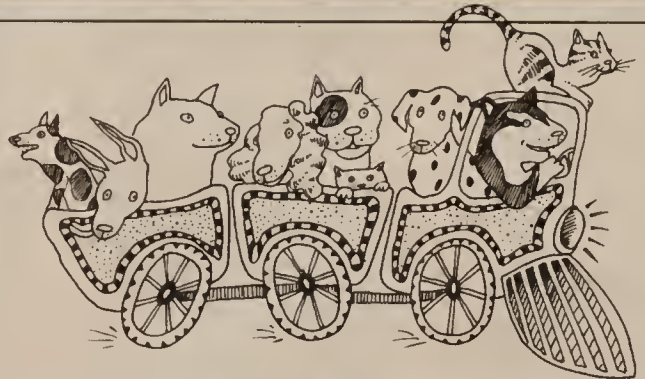
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For Apartments & Businesses:

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Downtown businesses, call Golden Gate Disposal for a pick up at 415-626-4000.

If you miss your Christmas tree pickup call for tree drop-off locations at (415) 554-RECYcle.



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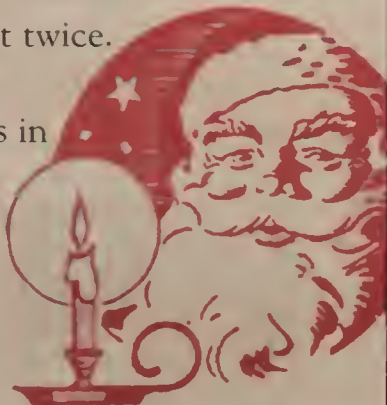
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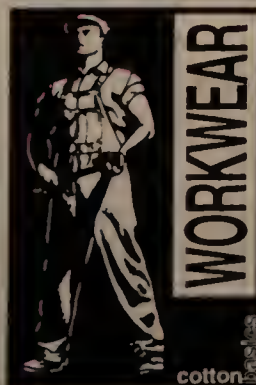
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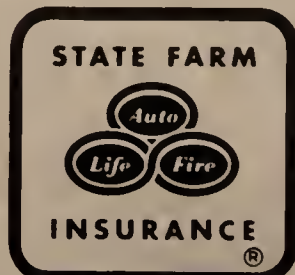
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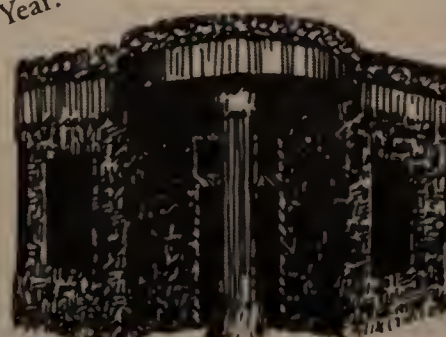
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The Creative Team Behind *Olive the Other Reindeer*

By Olivia Boler

Browse through any bookstore this time of year and you are likely to find a display of children's holiday stories. One book that may be prominently featured is *Olive the Other Reindeer*, by Noe Valley residents J. Otto Seibold and Vivian Walsh.

"It's a good story," says Seibold, who illustrated the book. "It's probably the best one we've written."

The book, published by Chronicle Books in 1997, follows the odyssey of Olive, a little dog who, taking a walk one December day, hears the people around her singing "All of the other reindeer..." a line she mistakes for "Olive the other reindeer." Olive decides her true calling is to help Santa at the North Pole, and indeed her sharp sense of smell ends up leading Santa's sleigh out of a fog bank.

The success of the book has led to other manifestations of *Olive*, some of them more welcome than others to her creators. Olive's image graced the window displays of Nordstrom stores during last year's holiday season. Seibold and Walsh also sold the TV rights to Fox. The production company of Matt Groening (creator of *The Simpsons* and *Futurama*) animated the story, and it appeared on television last year, featuring the voices of Drew Barrymore and Tim Meadows, as well as music by R.E.M.'s Michael Stipe. The network has told Seibold that it will air on Dec. 14 this year.

"Compared to TV, the book industry is gentle," says Seibold. "I really didn't like having to learn to speak 'Hollywood.' Once you sell your story to TV, they own everything, and you can't stop them from using or selling the story and images to say, Carl's Jr."

"We were naive when it comes to the ugly monkey world of television," adds Walsh, his wife and collaborator.

On the other hand, because of the success of *Olive the Other Reindeer*, which has sold over 500,000 copies, the couple have been able to continue working on other creative projects they love. One of those projects is their web site, www.jotto.com.

They created the web site about six years ago, attracted by the idea that they could do something imaginative on their own, something they could offer free to anyone with Internet access. They hope to publish their own books, from cheap paperbacks to art books, and not worry about making profits for some giant corporation.

The work-in-progress that excites Seibold the most is Bubblesoap, an animated rock band of bears named by their 5-year-old daughter, Amelia. Bubblesoap is what Seibold terms "narrative animation," a form that uses sound, animation, and interactivity. The bears will eventually play songs that Seibold and Walsh plan to write and have their rock star friends perform. Right now, if you visit the web site, you'll hear the band playing a continuous loop of drums and music.

"It's so unusual to find a web site that both adults and kids will like," says Walsh. "There's this rush to animate the web with fart jokes. Kids grow up fast—our 8-year old, Thea, says she's too old for Britney Spears now, as if only 5-year-olds can listen to Britney!—but I think our books and the web site are things for both kids and parents to enjoy."

Seibold and Walsh believe the web site and self-published books will pay for themselves through related merchandise



The international success of *Olive* has enabled Noe Valley authors Seibold and Walsh to spread to web publishing.

such as T-shirts and posters.

In fact, the couple have a shop in the Sony Metreon that opened in November called Bubblesoap which already sells T-shirts, jackets, purses, bags, books, pencil boxes, and little stuffed-animal Olives. A company called 1X2 makes the clothing, and the decorative graphics are Seibold's illustrations.

"Apparently, we're very big in Japan and Sweden," says Seibold. One can see why, as his style of drawing has a quirky, animé quality, an edgier version of Hello Kitty done in muted colors. Japanese characters decorate some of the clothing, which has a boxy, retro style.

Seibold and Walsh have collaborated on seven children's books in total. Their first book was *Mr. Lunch Takes a Plane Ride*, inspired by one of their dogs, Dexter. Other books include *Monkey Business* and *Penguin Dreams*. Seibold recently illustrated *The Pig in the Spigot*, written by poet Richard Wilbur.

The couple, both of whom are Bay Area natives, have been together for 20 years and have three children — Thea, Amelia, and Ulysses, age 3—whom they often turn to for inspiration. They have lived in Noe Valley for six years.

"We go to Martha's [Coffee] every day," says Seibold.

"We don't make our own coffee," adds Walsh. "And J. Otto has been deputized at the [24th Street] Cheese Shop."

Before the success of *Olive the Other Reindeer*, Walsh spent some time writing for *San Francisco Focus* and other smaller magazines. Seibold also did some commercial illustrations for the magazine as well as for others. He is a self-taught artist with a background in architectural design. The Yerba Buena Center for the Arts is featuring his work now through Jan. 28, 2001. Pieces include photos, iris prints, collage, a bit of Bubblesoap animation, as well as his children's artwork. Seibold often incorporates his family's drawings into his books; in fact, Thea wrote two pages of *Olive the Other Reindeer*.

The couple's publisher had been asking them to do something for "the shopping season," and for years they had joked about the play on words from the song "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer." Their little terrier, Olive, inspired the joke.

Seibold kept the word "Christmas" out of the book. He wanted the story to have a universal quality, and he and Walsh did that by staying away from the commercialization of the holiday season and concentrating on children's fantasies. So far, the feedback has been very positive.

"People tell us how they incorporate the story [of *Olive*] into their family Christmas," says Seibold. "In the cartoon, a giant menorah burns at the North Pole, and we've had responses from Jewish families who really appreciate that," says Seibold. "It's interesting when others' interpretation of a story is completely different from what you intended, but that's the nature of books." □



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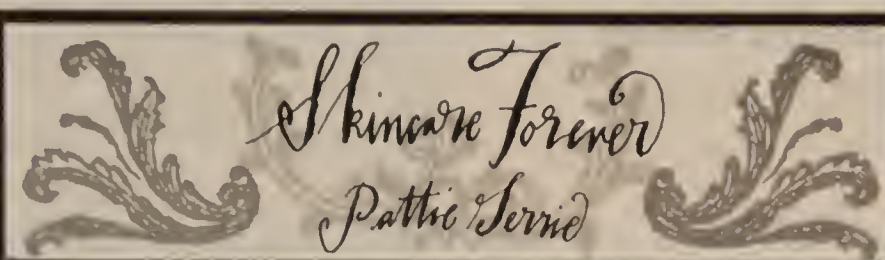
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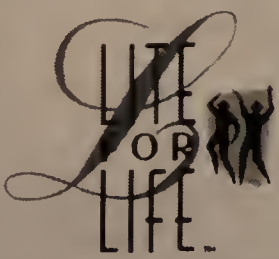
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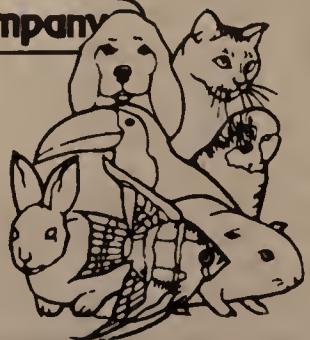
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Readers Wrap 2000

Where did they come from? Where did they go? The Voice has answers. But our correspondents are so many we're going to have to bump some into the new year. If you don't find your photo here, please check back with us in February. Thanks for your patience.



Sheldon Wong visited the Calanais Standing Stones on the Isle of Lewis off the west coast of Scotland. He carried with him the Ancient Times edition of the Voice to aid in his study.



Allan Rosenthal keeps up with the Voice while twins Zoe and Justin mug for their camera-toting mom Virginia at the Blue Mosque in Istanbul, Turkey.



See how nicely they share? Noe Valley residents (from left) David Linger, Alice Russell-Shapiro, Juliette Delventhal, and Bill Russell-Shapiro pose in front of the Palais des Papes on France's Pont d'Avignon.



The Voice's coverage of the Sydney games may have been lacking, but that didn't stop Dale Fehringer from reading every word near the entrance to the Olympic stadium. Wife Patty McCrary emailed us this photo.



James Lick teachers Ms. Beaudet (left) and Ms. McAlister stopped at the Trevi Fountain in Rome during an educational tour of Italy and Greece.

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FLORENCE'S FAMILY ALBUM

Illustrated Reminiscences
by Florence Holub

De Young at Heart

Although the month of December is always overcrowded with activities, I would like to add just one more thing to your list. At the end of the month, the de Young Museum will close its doors and begin construction of a new, state-of-the-art facility in Golden Gate Park, scheduled to open in 2005. So, this is your last chance for quite a while to appreciate the array of visual treasures there.

Just to whet your appetite, I'd like to describe some of the exceptional installations on display through the end of the year.

For those familiar with the Bible, as well as those eager for bits of American history, the exhibition titled "The Kingdoms of Edward Hicks" should fill the bill. Hicks, one of our nation's most famous folk artists, was born in 1780 in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. When he was a year and a half old, Hicks' mother died, and he was raised on a nearby farm by Quakers David and Elizabeth Twining.

At age 13, Edward was apprenticed to a coachmaker, who taught him to paint signs and decorations on horse-drawn carriages. Later, he started his own sign-painting business, which included doing ornamental brushwork on furniture. He also began attending Quaker meetings, and in 1811 he became an acknowledged minister. However, the Friends discouraged him from pursuing a livelihood in painting, a calling they deemed frivolous.

He gave up his business, probably reluctantly. But in 1816, he took up easel painting, this time cleverly adopting a subject taken from the Bible that the Friends could not very well object to—the peaceable kingdom, described in the book of Isaiah, chapter 11, verses 6 through 9.

During the next 33 years, Hicks painted 60 versions of this theme for friends and relatives. Each painting shows a serene, pastoral setting, reflecting the Quaker prophesy of peaceful coexistence between man and his envi-

ronment. The wild animals are pictured as sweet and gentle, and a little child moves among them, trusting and unafraid.

Meanwhile, within the congregation, friction had grown between the orthodox Quakers and a splinter group, called "Hicksites" (after cousin Elias Hicks), with whom Edward was aligned. He began adding the figure of Elias Hicks to his Kingdoms, along with the text of the verses from Isaiah, such as "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb," in bold print. In the background, he depicted the early Quaker he idolized most, William Penn, negotiating an equitable treaty with the Delaware Indians that would keep the peace for 100 years. In the later paintings, a graceful young woman was introduced to signify liberty and innocence. She sits with her arm



During its last month of operation until 2005, the de Young Museum will display 20 paintings in the "peaceable kingdom" series by American folk artist Edward Hicks.

raised to hold the dove of peace on her finger, while beside her stands our nation's symbol, the bald eagle.

The paintings' message is timeless and universal, the style is "naïve" and charming. In addition to 20 versions of the peaceable kingdom, the Hicks exhibition features historical paintings and pastorals, and farm scenes recalling the farmland of the Twinings.

Another exhibit, "Great Nature: The Transcendental Landscapes of Chiura Obata," explores the life and works of the late master Chiura Obata (1885–1975), who was the most prominent teacher and practitioner of Japanese *sumi-e* ink and brush painting in the Bay Area. Obata's keen observation and reverence for nature shine eloquently in his renderings of the High Sierra and waterfalls and forests of Yosemite. His works also include firsthand drawings of the 1906 Earthquake and Fire.

Like so many Japanese-Americans (he had emigrated to San Francisco in 1903), Obata and his family were

interned in relocation centers during World War II. My man Leo and I visited our friend Nobuo Kitagaki, whose family was interned at Tanforan Relocation Center along with Obata's. We saw how under Obata's guidance the internees made creative use of their time, as demonstrated by the impressive art show on display. They employed whatever materials they had, even carving apricot seeds into beautiful miniscule objects of art!

Obata's son, Gyo, was already in college at the time and was allowed to complete his education. Today he is an internationally respected architect. Gyo's daughter, Kiku, an art major, was one of Leo's finest photography students at Stanford in the '70s. Chiura's wife, Huruko, was a master of *ikebana*, the art of flower arrangement. Until her death in 1987, she conducted classes in Japantown, and exhibited elegant works that we admired yearly at the Cherry Blossom Festival.

A third exhibition features a sampling of John Gutmann's 1999 bequest to the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. Gutmann was a versatile artist and photographer, as well as a collector of African carved-wood sculpture. In two adjoining galleries are 70 of his remarkable photographs of China, Burma, and India, which he shot in his spare time while serving in the Armed Forces during World War II. About 20 pieces of west and central African sculpture are displayed in the hall leading to the cafe.

Gutmann was born in Germany, where he had a promising career as a painter and art instructor until its abrupt halt during the rise of Hitler. He left in 1933 and headed straight for San Francisco, where he lived for more than 60 years. Although I never met the gentleman, a Noe Valley oldtimer informed me that Mr. Gutmann once lived at the southwest corner of Church and Liberty streets. There is a painting, unfortunately not currently on view, that he painted from his front window looking across Dolores Park to the city beyond.

In the textile gallery, "From Three Continents" features objects from Africa, Asia, and South America, acquired by the museum in the past four years. The artifacts are mainly apparel, and they reveal a great deal about the people who created them. Among pre-literate peoples, clothing often served as a metaphor for status, revealing at a glance gender, rank, marital status, religion, and regional or tribal associations.

Come to think of it, maybe this applies to the garb of us literate people, too.



From Brazil there are spectacular feather head-dresses obtained from the exotic birds of the Amazon rain forest. In South America, feathers were highly prized for their brilliant color and also because they were so difficult to acquire. They

could be used as currency or tribute, or in ceremonies in which the wearer believed he came to possess the bird's vital force and powers.

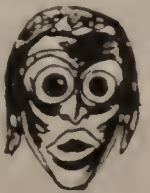
Two ancient garments that were woven 1,500 years ago in Peru, a tunic and a mantle, were donated anonymously in honor of the Incan culture, which has produced transcendent works of textile art for 2,500 years. There is also a fine collection of carefully woven bags used to hold the sacred coca plant.

These are just a few of the 50 acquisitions on display, and each plays a fascinating role in the history of mankind.

And for art lovers who want to take a peek into the future, the plan for the new museum, created by Herzog & de Meuron, is on exhibit in two rooms near the entrance. Architectural renderings, site photographs, videos, and models give a preview of the new directions the de Young Museum is taking to mirror its diverse audience. The new building will be equipped with all the latest technology to preserve and display the priceless treasures within its walls. You've probably guessed that the de Young is my favorite museum, and I, for one, can hardly wait until 2005!

To encourage everybody to take a last look at its treasures, the de Young Museum will be admission-free during its last week of business, Dec. 26 to 31.

On Friday, Dec. 22, after 20 years of docent duty, I shall give my final tour for the public. My vocal cords need a rest! If you can't make it to my talk, note that docent tours are given every day at 12:15 p.m. □



Illustrations by Florence Holub

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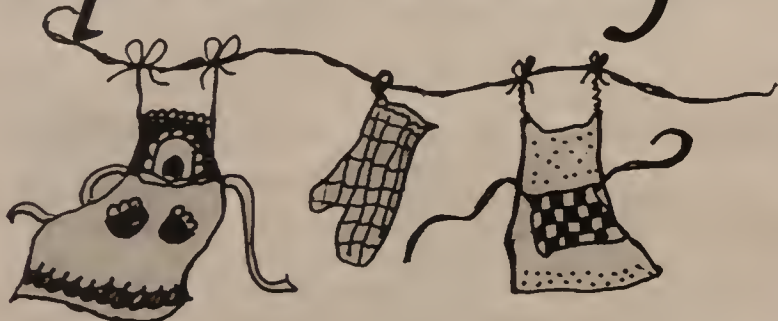
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ARE WE THERE YET?

Family Adventures Close to Home

A Trip to the San Francisco Food Bank

By Janis Cooke Newman

I'm standing with a group of screaming kids in the minus-4-degree chill of a giant meat freezer.

"Feel my legs!" shouts a first-grader who's still dressed in his soccer shorts.

"My nose is froze!" sings a second-grade girl whose braids are starting to stiffen into frozen branches.

"This isn't chilly at all," says my kindergarten son. The steam coming from his mouth hangs in the frigid air like the word balloons in a comic strip.

"Can we leave now?" asks one of the shivering moms. She's pulled the sleeves of her sweater over her hands and is trying to blow warm air into her face.

The giant freezer belongs to the San Francisco Food Bank, an organization that each year distributes 12 million pounds of food to hungry people in San Francisco. We've come here, a group of about 30 parents and kids, as part of Synergy School's Community Service project. Our purpose is to raise money for the school—friends and family pledge money for each hour of volunteer work we do—but I have an additional motive for subjecting myself and my 5-year-old to the frosty interior of the Food Bank's freezer. As we descend into what is referred to in our house as the Season of Greed, I want to make certain Alex understands that there's more to the holidays than whether Santa knows which Pokémon we'd like under our tree.

"I have just lost all feeling in my baby toes," says the mom with the sweater pulled over her hands. And Dave Vandembroeke, the Food Bank's volunteer coordinator, finally lets us out of the freezer.

The next stop on our tour is the Food Bank's well-stocked, and considerably warmer, shopping floor.

"What makes the San Francisco Food Bank different," Dave tells us, "is that we let the agencies who feed the hungry choose what they want to serve."

Nearly 250 local agencies, including childcare programs, homeless shelters, and soup kitchens, shop at the Food Bank, helping themselves to cereal, soup, bread, and meat, all for only 14 cents a pound, a fee that helps the Food Bank cover expenses.

The kids stare in awe at a row of metal shelves crammed with every kind of cereal: Cheerios, Raisin Bran, Count Chocula. "By 6 p.m. tonight, every single box of this cereal will be gone," Dave tells them.

Then he leads us outside and makes us gather round a big dumpster.

"Nothing goes to waste here," Dave says. "Even the food that spoils is sent to a hog farm." He opens the dumpster's lid, revealing heads of rotten lettuce, browned bananas, and something green and unidentifiable. The kids climb up the sides to peer inside.

"Smells delicious," says one of the boys, taking a big sniff.

Mercifully, Dave drops the lid on the dumpster, and then takes us back inside to the isolation room, where out-of-date products and damaged cans are sorted out. This room is home to "Dave's Food



The well-stocked shelves of the San Francisco Food Bank are like canyon walls to kids and grown-ups alike.
Photos by Ken Newman



Aidan Weir, a 6-year-old student at Synergy School, helps sort kiwi fruit.

Fossil Museum," a display that includes rusted cans of baking powder, instant mashed potatoes from companies no longer in existence, and a box of corn flakes whose cover features a photograph of Elizabeth Ward, Miss America 1982.

Next, Dave takes us to the warehouse, where floor-to-ceiling shelves hold pallets of Hershey's chocolate syrup, apple juice, Saltines, and egg noodles. The place looks like a super-sized Costco. He leads us to several cardboard boxes the size of small above-ground swimming pools. Inside the boxes are more kiwis than I've seen over the course of my entire life.

"This..." says Dave, sweeping his arm across the enormous kiwi boxes like a game show host, "...is your job."

Our task is to sort through the kiwis, tossing the bad ones into a dumpster and restocking the rest into smaller boxes. We put on rubber surgical gloves to protect our hands, grab some plastic milk cartons to sit on, and start sorting.

Kiwi sorting turns out to be the perfect kid job. First of all, the kids are completely in love with the idea of being allowed to hurl fruit across the room. Sec-

ondly, no self-respecting kid would actually eat a kiwi.

"How do we tell if they're no good?" asks a dad, eyeing a suspicious-looking kiwi.

"If they're squoozing juice," his first-grade son tells him.

"See, this one's real mushy," says a girl with no front teeth. She gives the kiwi in her hand a squeeze, sending a greenish ooze down the sleeve of her Barbie sweatshirt.

When one of the kids gets bored, his dad blows up a surgical glove and turns

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it into a rooster head.

Amazingly, after a couple of hours, all the good kiwis are in boxes, the bad ones are in the dumpster, and every child smells like a fruit named after a flightless bird from New Zealand.

Later that night, as Alex is getting ready for bed, we talk about who might eat our kiwis.

"You mean these families don't have enough money for food?" he asks, pulling on his Superman pajamas.

"That's right," I tell him.

"Maybe we could give them some of my Halloween candy," I toss him a stuffed bear in a Giants uniform, thinking that perhaps now we can stop referring to this time of year as the Season of Greed.

"Hey, Mom?" Alex says, as I'm turning out the light.

"Yes?"

"Are you sure you told Santa, Bulbasaurus?"

Are We There Yet? is a Voice feature about places to go and things to do with your kids. If there's an activity or outing you'd like to see explored, please email Janis Cooke Newman at j-newman@pacbell.net or the Noe Valley Voice at jaxvoice@aol.com

Volunteering with Your Kids

There are lots of opportunities for parents and kids to volunteer all over San Francisco. Here are just a few of them.

The San Francisco Food Bank. Parents with their children, and kids 16 and over, can volunteer to work at the Food Bank's warehouse at 900 Pennsylvania Ave. on Potrero Hill. The Food Bank also needs people to help organize food drives. Contact Chris Sams at 415-282-1900 to volunteer. You can also find out more at www.sffoodbank.com.

PAWS (Pets Are Wonderful Support). PAWS is dedicated to helping people with AIDS keep their animal companions. Parents who volunteer with their children can spend Saturdays working in PAWS Noe Valley Pet Food Bank, located in Bethany Church at Clipper and Sanchez. They can also deliver pet food to clients, walk dogs, scoop litter boxes, and take pets to the vet. Kids can also run pet food drives in local supermarkets. To find out how you can help, call Tim Costigan at 415-241-1460. PAWS web site is www.pawssf.org.

Friends of the Urban Forest. Friends of the Urban Forest plants and maintains trees throughout the city. Children accompanied by their parents, and kids 14 and older, can volunteer to help plant trees on Saturday mornings. Contact Jeanette Hill at 415-561-6890, ext. 100, to volunteer. Find out about Friends of the Urban Forest events and tree plantings at www.fuf.net.

More Volunteer Opportunities

The Volunteer Center of San Francisco (VCSF) is a clearinghouse for volunteer opportunities in the city. Whether you want to volunteer for AIDS, education, the homeless, or the environment, you can match your skills and interests with the right organization. Get information from the Volunteer Center's web site at www.vcsf.org, or call 415-982-8999, TDD 415-982-4663. The Volunteer Center also puts out the excellent "Guide to Youth Volunteer Opportunities," which lists organizations where kids 10 and up can volunteer on their own. Call to get a free copy.

A Word of Caution

Bear in mind that most of the organizations where you'll be volunteering are not child-proofed. Be sure to keep on eye on younger children while working.

J.C.N.

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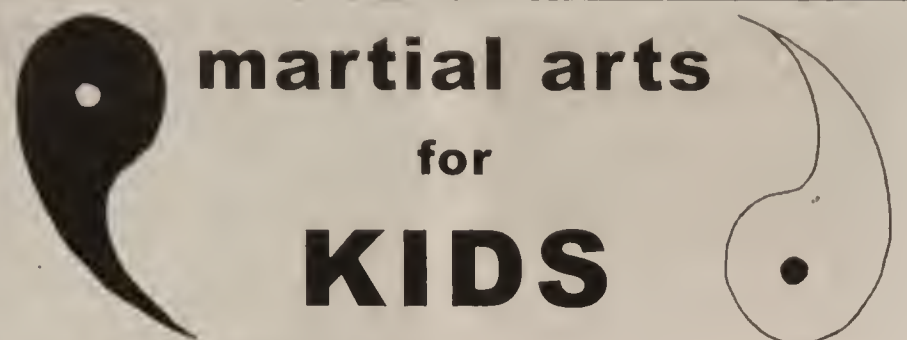
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MORE MOUTHS TO FEED

By Maire Farrington

Henry Carlson Bennett-Hanes
Zoe Frances Bennett-Hanes

For most expectant parents, choosing just the right moniker for a new baby can be a daunting experience.

For Bob and Christy Bennett-Hanes, the task became doubly hard when an ultrasound at 12 weeks revealed the couple had conceived twins. The challenge grew exponentially when they decided not to be informed of the twins' genders. "It was like we had the A list and the B list," says Bob. "But eventually we narrowed it down to two boy's names and two girl's names, with a favorite for each."

As luck would have it, their favorites ruled. On Nov. 15, 1999, the proud parents welcomed both a son and a daughter into their family.

Henry Carlson Bennett-Hanes arrived first, at 1:02 p.m., hitting the scales at 4 pounds, 14 ounces. Zoe Frances Bennett-Hanes soon followed, at 1:07 p.m., weighing a slight 3 pounds, 5 ounces.

Bob was present for the birth at UCSF, as was a small army of medical personnel. "I had to deliver in the O.R.," Christy relates. "With multiples, they like you to be somewhere where they can act really fast if they need to."

A nine-day hospital stay ensured that the twins had gained sufficient weight and were in the pink before they joined their parents at home on 24th Street.

Now approaching their first birthday, brother and sister are a vigorous pair. Henry is a robust fellow with a luxurious head of blond hair, while Zoe is a more petite strawberry blonde. Both have blue eyes and a shining array of teeth.

"Percentage-wise, they're still about the same size—Henry is 50 percent bigger," Dad observes. "She's just 17 pounds." This fact has not gone unnoticed by the neighborhood when the twins are tooling around in their tandem stroller. "They're such different sizes, a lot of people assume they're siblings, not twins," says Bob. "They'll say, 'How close are they?' which is basically impossible unless he was a very small 15-month-old and she was a really big 5-month-old!"

"They're both very social," Christy says. "The weird thing is that before they were born, we had a strong opinion that girls turned out like girls because they were socialized that way, and boys the same thing. And we were not planning on treating these guys differently. We were going to prove everyone wrong about that [biology is destiny] theory."

To the couple's chagrin, their premise fell flat. "From the day they were born, they were as different as night and day," Christy reports. "Zoe was a lot more watchful, making eye contact and focusing on you, and kind of quiet and perceptive. And Henry was more about karate-chopping arms and kicking—he is really physical. The same object that Zoe will spend 30 minutes examining, he picks it up and it's bash, bash, bash. They engage in stereotypical male and female behavior much more so than we ever imagined."

Bob, too, has noted some distinctions. "Zoe's really outgoing," he says. "Most of the time she's happy and talkative. She's more independent, will play by herself, and entertain herself much more. Henry's driven a little bit more by hunger, sleep, and physical action. He cries more when he's hungry."

Bob, 38, and Christy, 35, were living in Tokyo when they met in 1992. Each was teaching, and Christy also worked in



Bob and Christy Bennett-Hanes have two to bring to "Babyland" night at the Diamond Corner Cafe: Zoe (left) and her slightly bigger and older twin brother Henry.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

the copyrighting field. The couple moved to San Francisco in 1996, initially settling in the Richmond District. Wedding bells rang the following year, and on April 1, 1998, the two took over ownership of the Diamond Corner Cafe on 24th Street.

"We feel like we have three babies, between the cafe and these two," Christy says. "The cafe was our firstborn."

In their early days at the cafe, the couple could often be found behind the counter, working alongside the staff. Now they are more involved in the business side of things. "We have a really good manager," says Bob, "so that allows us to be here [at home] with the babies a lot."

By request from the cafe's regulars, a continuously updated exhibit of baby photos is on display there. Although opinion among the customers is divided as to who resembles whom, Bob thinks that both offspring favor Christy.

Popular demand also dictates that Zoe and Henry make regular appearances at the Diamond Corner on Thursday nights. "That's the known night. Other friends of ours in the neighborhood who have kids stop by too, and it becomes Babyland," says Christy. "I think it's the reason the twins are so social, they've been passed around."

When Zoe and Henry pop by the cafe during daylight hours, they inevitably end up nestled in the arms of the staff at neighboring PastaGina. "They all have known the babies since they were little," says Bob. "When they hear that the babies are there, one of them will come over and take Henry or Zoe, and they'll be gone for 30 minutes, hanging out with the customers in their shop, completely happy. They don't ever seem to miss us."

The twosome are never at a loss for entertainment at home either, and lately they've taken a fancy to emptying out drawers. "Yesterday they pulled out the Tupperware drawer two or three times," Bob says. "They like nothing better than to pull CDs off the rack or go for a bag or box, just to take things out and drop them. Zoe especially, she's a great unpacker."

The twins love to play with the dishwasher tray, and if there happen to be dishes in the rack, it's not long before the sound of clanging plates and silverware fills the kitchen. They also like to park themselves in front of the washing machine and watch the clothes spin around through the glass door. And Henry amuses himself by pushing the little swinging vent on the garbage can lid. "Of course, it really grosses us out," Christy laughs.

"They're almost always together," says Bob. "You can put them across the room, and when you come back they'll be together. They follow each other around."

Christy jokes that upon receiving the news that she was carrying twins, her first reaction was, "Oh my God, we need a new car! Two car seats, two cribs!"

"Two of everything," Bob agrees. "Before they were born, whenever I would think about having kids, I'd picture one baby. I would think of me holding it, then Christy holding it. Two I could never picture. [But now] I can't imagine having just one—it would seem so strange."

The couple have become pros at juggling their little ones. "Individually they're both easy babies," says Christy. "It's the combination of the two that makes it a challenge." On busy days, "Divide and Conquer" is the strategy that works best. "Each of us takes one of the babies and does different things for the day, which is faster than trying to haul them both around together."

For Christy, being doubly blessed has been "overall great. It's been super-challenging, but it's an amazing thing. Even being completely exhausted, it's amazing how patient you can find yourself to be—that you can give that much."

"The lack of sleep is by far the hardest thing," says Bob. "To get eight hours of sleep would be great. But the next morning it doesn't matter. You go in and they're standing in their cribs and smiling at you, and it all melts away." □

More Mouths to Feed wants to show off your newest family member. If you have welcomed a new baby into the house, or adopted a teenager, please send your announcement to the *Noe Valley Voice*, More Mouths to Feed, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Or email us at javvoice@aol.com. We'd also appreciate a phone number, so we can arrange for the family portrait. □



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BOOKS *in our* BRANCH

This month's new books list, provided by librarians Roberta Greifer, Mark Mackler, and Carol Small, features a comprehensive history of Chinese art, a biography of Joe DiMaggio, and a peek at Amelia Bloomer's bloomers, in the children's section. To check out a book's availability, call 695-5095, or visit the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library at 451 Jersey Street near Castro. In addition to books, the branch offers magazines, CDs, music, a sunny (or rainy) outside deck, a computer with Internet access, and the archives of the *Noe Valley Voice*. Hours are Tuesdays, 10 to 9; Wednesdays, 1 to 9; Thursdays, 10 to 6; Fridays, 1 to 6; and Saturdays, 10 to 6.

Adult Fiction

- ◆ In Don Passman's thriller *Mirage*, a techic whose company is bombed has a suspicious alibi.
- ◆ In *Too Far Afield*, by Günter Grass, the lives of two old East Germans serve as a metaphor for Germany's reunification.

Adult Nonfiction

- ◆ Beautifully illustrated, *Art in China*, by Craig Clunes, surveys the development of Chinese art from neolithic times to the present day.
- ◆ Mary Karr's *Cherry: A Memoir*, is the author's candid sequel to *The Liar's Club*.
- ◆ Richard Ben Cramer's *Joe DiMaggio: The Hero's Life* explores the dark and unhappy side of DiMaggio's fame.

*Annotations by Roberta Greifer and Mark Mackler
Librarian, Noe Valley Branch*

Preschool Story Time

- ◆ Children ages 3 to 5 will hear astonishing tales at the library's *preschool story time*, 10 a.m., Tuesdays, Dec. 5 and 19.

Films

- ◆ Preschoolers ages 3 to 5 can watch *films* at 10 and 11 a.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 12.

Tenants' Rights

- ◆ Ora Prochovnik of the New College *Housing Clinic* discusses the legal rights of tenants, sponsored by the Coalition of Concerned Legal Professionals, 11 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 9.

Poetry Readings

- ◆ National Book Award finalist Kim Addonizio is the library's featured poet on Wednesday, Dec. 13, and poets Priscilla Lee and Yvonne Cannon read from their work on Wednesday, Jan. 24; 7:30 p.m.

Aromatherapy for Babies

- ◆ An aromatherapy for babies and toddlers workshop led by Cary and Johanna Friedman begins at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2001.

Children's Fiction

- ◆ If you read *The Itsy Bitsy Spider*, by Lorianne Siomades, you may be surprised to see the main character in a well-known poem sporting shoes and colorful clothes. *Ages 1 to 3.*
- ◆ From alarm clock in the morning to hugs and kisses at night, a young child describes his hectic but happy life in *Day Care Days*, by Mary Brigid Barrett. *Ages 3 to 5.*
- ◆ The youngest sibling in the family, concerned that he may not be growing taller, finally gets a lovely surprise when spring comes, in *Jacob's Tree*, by Holly Keller. *Ages 3 to 5.*
- ◆ *Full Belly Bowl*, written by Jim Aylesworth and illustrated by Wendy Halperin, is a heartwarming story of domestic life, change, and a little greed. *Ages 5 to 8.*
- ◆ A certain piece of women's apparel shocked some people at first, but now is widely accepted, as shown by Shana Corey in *You Forgot Your Skirt, Amelia Bloomer!* *Ages 8 to 10.*

- ◆ In Dan Gutman's *Jackie & Me*, Joe travels from the present to 1947, where he watches some World Series games and learns a lot about character from Jackie Robinson. *Ages 9 and up.*

- ◆ In her poignant novel, *Getting Near to Baby*, Audrey Coulombis shows that people may have different ways of expressing grief after a traumatic event, all of which are appropriate. *Ages 10 and up.*



Children's Nonfiction

- ◆ In *Dinosaur Babies*, Kathleen Weidner Zoehfeld discusses a variety of clues scientists are using to figure out what parenting skills dinosaurs may or may not have had. *Ages 6 to 9.*

*Annotations by Carol Small
Children's Librarian, Noe Valley Branch*



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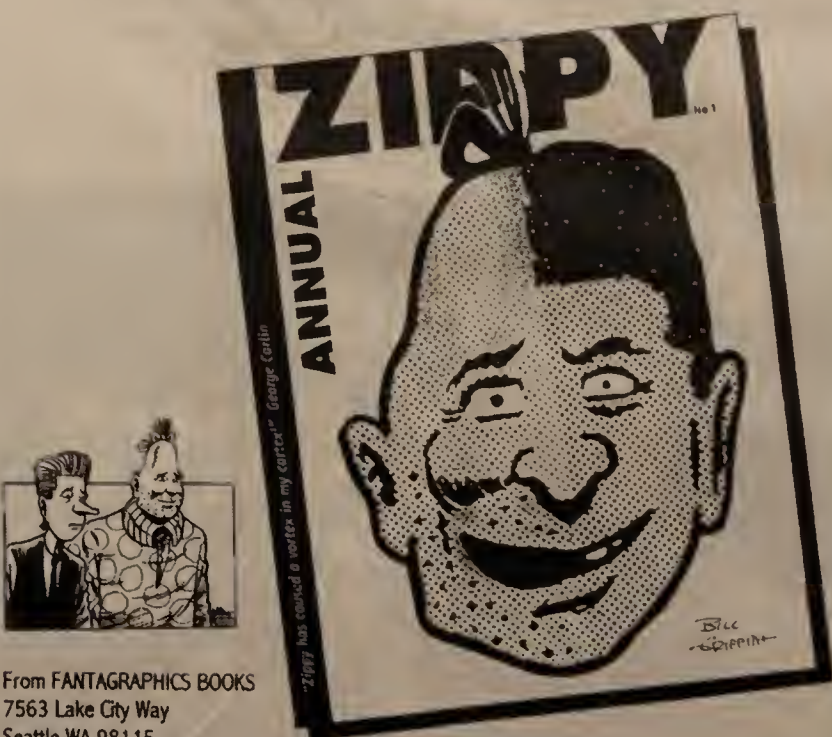
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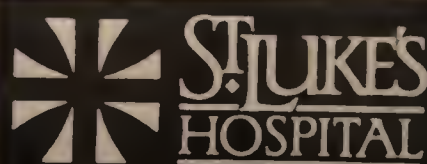
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- * Christmas Eve @ 11pm: *Carols and Candlelight*
- * Christmas Day: 11am Worship and potluck brunch

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CHRISTMAS EVE. SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

4:30 p.m.: Family Mass with Children's Choir

8:00 p.m.: Mass in English with Adult Choir

11:30 p.m.: Christmas Concert

12:00 Midnight: Bi-lingual Mass with Choir

CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES, MONDAY, DECEMBER 25

8:00 & 9:15 a.m., and 4:30 p.m. (English) • 10:45 a.m. (Bi-lingual)

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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31: REGULAR SUNDAY SCHEDULE

NEW YEAR'S DAY MASSES, MONDAY, JANUARY 1, 2001

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FESTIVAL EUCHARIST at 11:00 p.m.

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CHRISTMAS DAY, Monday, December 25:
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Saturday, December 23

Confessions, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24

Masses: 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12:00 Noon

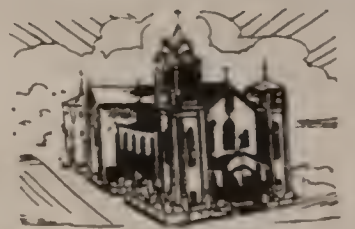
Family Mass at 5:00 p.m. and Midnight

Christmas Day, Monday, December 25

Masses: Same as on Sunday: 8:00 and 10:00 a.m.;

11:00 a.m. in Spanish at the Convent, and 12:00 Noon

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:

Christmas Eve, Sunday, Dec. 24
Family Mass, 5:00 p.m.
Misa en Español, 9:00 p.m.
Midnight Mass, 12:00 a.m.

Christmas Day, Monday, Dec. 25
Mass in English, 9:00 a.m.



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CHRISTMAS EVE Services

Sunday, December 24

Worship with Communion, 10:30 a.m.

Family Worship of
Lessons and Carols, 7 p.m.

NEW YEAR'S EVE Services

Sunday, December 31

Sing Out the Old and In the New, 10:30 a.m.

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Preparing for the New, 7 p.m.

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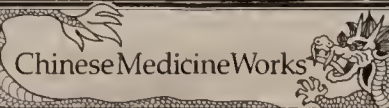
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Mailing Address: Call Greg Clark for info.
Meetings: First Tuesday of month, in the auditorium at Upper Noe Rec Center, Day & Sanchez, 7 p.m.

Castro Area Planning + Action
Contact: Linton Stables, 541-0344, ext. 230; capa@home4us.org
Meetings: Second Thursday of month, Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100 Collingwood St., 7:30 p.m.

Cesar Chavez Neighborhood Association
Contact: Ed White, 774-3237
Mailing Address: First Church of God, 3728 Cesar Chavez St., San Francisco, CA 94110
Meetings: Last Thursday of month, First Church of God, 7:30 p.m.

Diamond Heights Community Association
Contact: Robert Dockendorff, 826-3867
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 31529, San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: First Thursday of month, 7:30 p.m. Call for location.

Dolores Heights Improvement Club
Contact: Amy Powell, 647-4228
Mailing Address: 3732 21st St., San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Bimonthly; membership meetings semi-annually. Call for details.

Duncan Newburg Association (DNA)
Contact: Dennis Downing, 441-9243; Keith Eickman, 282-8988; Evelyn Martin, 826-6734; or Deanna Mooney, 821-4045
Mailing Address: 560 Duncan St., San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Held periodically. Call for details.

East & West of Castro Street Improvement Club
Contact: Paul Kantus, 647-3753
Mailing Address: 492 Douglass St., San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: First Wednesday of month, Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St., 7:30 p.m. Call for summer holiday schedule.

Eureka Valley Promotion Association
Contact: Lion Barnett, 255-3624
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 14137, San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Third Thursday (except July, August, and December), Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100 Collingwood St., 7 p.m.

Fair Oaks Neighbors
Contact: Paul Nixon, 647-5183
Mailing Address: 163 Fair Oaks St., San Francisco, CA 94110
Meetings: Call for details.

Fairmount Neighborhood Association
Contact: Susan Nutter, 285-8484
Mailing Address: 78 Harper St., San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Held periodically at Upper Noe Recreation Center, Day & Sanchez, 7 p.m.

Friends of Glen Canyon Park
Contact: Richard Craib, 648-0862
Mailing Address: 140 Turquoise Way, San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Third Wednesday of the month, Glen Park Recreation Center, 7:30 p.m.

Friends of Noe Valley
Contact: Jean Amos, 826-2044
Mailing Address: 327 Jersey St., San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Second Thursday of month, Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St., 7:45 p.m.

La Leche League of San Francisco
Contact: Abi, 282-1937
Meetings: First Tuesday of month, Bernal Heights Library (downstairs), Cortland & Moultrie, 11 a.m.

Liberty Hill Neighborhood Association
Contact: Katherine Pietrycha, president; Katherine.Pietrycha@wcom.com
Mailing Address: 3288 21st St., Box 44, San Francisco, CA 94110
Meetings: Executive board meets first Tuesday of month; general meetings quarterly. Call for details.

Noe Courts Coalition
Contact: Dr. Tom Mills, secretary.
Voicemail: 675-0110; nichapin@aol.com
Mailing Address: Noe Courts Coalition, P.O. Box 460520, San Francisco, CA 94146
Meetings: Irregular. Call for information.

Noe Valley Democratic Club
Contact: Dave Monks, 821-4087
Mailing Address: 167 Valley Street, San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Second Wednesday of month, 7:30 p.m. Call for location.

Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association
Contact: Robert Roddick, 641-8692
Mailing Address: Robert T. Roddick, Noe Valley Law Offices, P.O. Box 460574, San Francisco, CA 94114-6003
Meetings: Last Wednesday of month, Bank of America, 24th & Castro, 9 a.m.

Noe Valley Neighborhood Parks Improvement Association
Contact: Debra Niemann, 641-4934, or Krista Keegan, 550-9050
Mailing Address: 4171 23rd St., San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Held periodically. Call for details.

Outer Noe Valley Merchants
Contact: Jim Appenrodt, 641-1500
Mailing Address: 294 29th St., San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: First Monday of month, St. Paul's Church cafeteria, 3 p.m. Call to confirm.

Upper Noe Neighbors
Contact: Vicki Rosen, 285-0473
Mailing Address: 169 Valley St., San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Last Thursday of month, Upper Noe Rec Center, Day & Sanchez, 7:30 p.m.

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Evening Glow at Yosemite, 1930



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The Peaceable Kingdom, 1846

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The Scoop on Class Ads

IT'S EASY. Just type or print the text of your ad, multiply the number of words by **30¢ A WORD**, and send us a check or money order for the total amount. (Note that a phone number, including area code, counts as just one word.)

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10 FOR 10 DISCOUNT: The *Noe Valley Voice* publishes a news edition 10 months a year. (We're on vacation in January and August.) If you place the *same* class ad in 10 issues, you are entitled to a 10 percent discount. To figure your cost, deduct 10 percent from the total amount due for 10 issues.

The next *Noe Valley Voice* will be the February 2001 issue, distributed in Noe Valley on Friday, Feb. 2. **THE DEADLINE FOR CLASS ADS IS JAN. 15, 2001.**

Sorry, the *Voice* is unable to accept Class Ads by phone or email at this time. However, there's one consolation: The ads are also displayed on our web site at no extra charge. Go to www.noevalleyvoice.com.

Class advertisers should keep in mind that only the first few words of the ad (not to exceed one line of type) will be set in bold. Also, receipts and tear sheets will be provided only if your order is accompanied by an SASE. Thank you.

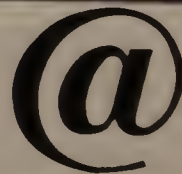
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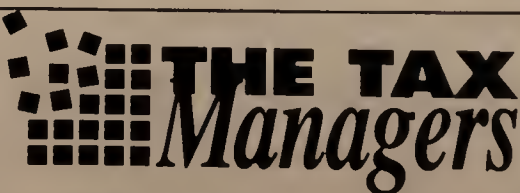
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Words Wanted: The *Noe Valley Voice* welcomes submissions of poems, stories, and essays. Send manuscript and self-addressed, stamped envelope, plus name, phone, and email to the *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114.



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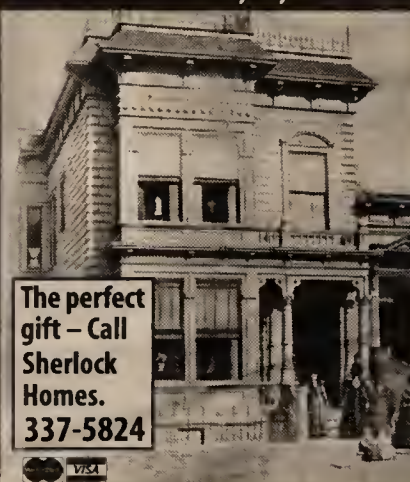
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and now for the RUMORS behind the news

Ayes from the Nay-bors

By Mazook

NOE VALLEY HAS SPOKEN: The results for Noe Valley have been tabulated by the S.F. Department of Elections, and as expected, Al Gore was elected president of Noe Valley by a landslide, with Dianne Feinstein winning as our senator and Nancy Pelosi our congresswoman.

The surprises came from those *other* neighborhoods east of the Bay Bridge Toll Plaza. As of Nov. 26—almost three weeks after the Nov. 7 election—frat boy George W. Bush is clinging to a 530-vote lead over our pal Al in Florida, which would give Bush the state's 25 electoral votes and the 270 needed to advance to the White House. That, despite the fact that Gore squeaked by in the popular vote, 50,133,912 to 49,805,216.

At press time, poor Al's legions are demanding a full manual recount in Fla., and the election has been dumped in the lap of nine old farts on the Supreme Court. We still don't know who is going to lead the country in its galactic battle against global warming, much less build us a shield over Downtown Noe Valley.

Meanwhile, the city under King Willie has not officially certified the San Francisco results either. However, I, as an agent of the Noe Valley Bureau of Investigation (NVBI), have sorted through most of our chicken scratches.

They reveal a feisty bunch. Out of 18,587 registered voters in Noe Valley, an impressive 13,085 actually voted. That's a 70% turnout. Citywide, the voter turnout was 63%.

The Noe presidential vote went like this: 10,631 for Democrats Al Gore and Joe Lieberman (81%), 1,209 for Republicans George Bush and Dick Cheney (9%), and 1,057 for Green Party-ers Ralph Nader and Winona Laduke (8%). The remaining 2% of us cast 55 votes for Libertarian Harry Browne, 17 votes for the Reform Party's Pat Buchanan, 9 votes for the Natural Law faction's John Hagelin, and 5 votes for the American Independent Party's Howard Phillips. Oh, there were also 14 write-in votes—for Zippy, I presume.

☎☎☎

SUPES DU JOUR: The District 8 supervisorial election results left frontrunner Mark Leno and first runner-up Eileen Hansen squaring off in the Dec. 12 runoff. Mark was a mere 5 votes short of receiving the 50% plus 1 necessary to win.

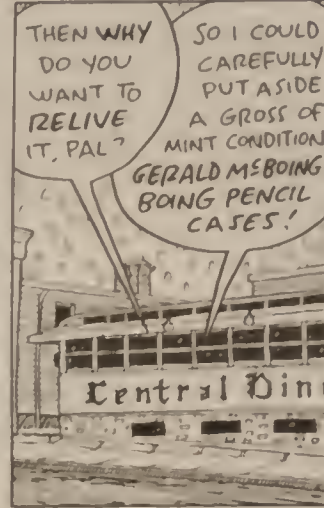
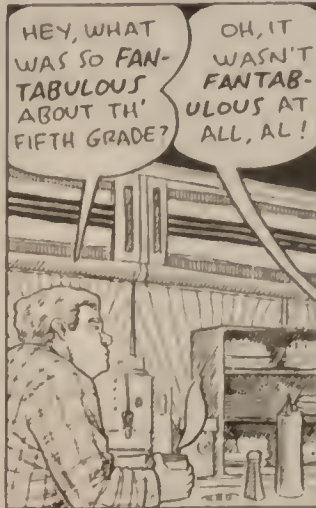
According to the latest published tallies by the Department of Elections, Noe Valley gave Leno 5,448 votes (16,908 in all of District 8, which is 49.9% of the total votes cast) and Eileen Hansen 3,740 (11,425 in the whole district, or 33.7%). James Green garnered 765 Noe votes, Scott Bingham 446, Gary Virginia 322, and Shawn O'Hearn 295.

In the state propositions, Noe Valleons voted overwhelmingly (10,045 to 2,102) in favor of Proposition 36, which proposed that the possession and use of "controlled substances" would be addressed with medical treatment, not incarceration. The school voucher proposition, 38, which would have authorized annual state payments of up to \$4,000 per pupil for private or religious schools, was wisely defeated statewide, and handily so in Noe Valley: 10,521 nays to 1,904 ayes.

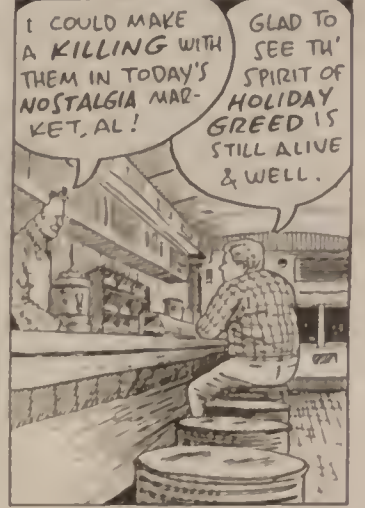
ZIPPY



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In a sampling of local propositions, Noe Valley voted (and this is rounded to the nearest 100, even though I *know* each vote is important) in support of branch library bonds (Prop. A) 9,900 to 2,400, which helped it pass citywide; the children's fund (Prop. D) we supported 9,600 to 2,600, and it too passed.

The Noe Valley tally on Golden Gate Park's JFK Drive Saturday closure (Prop. G) was close—6,700 ayes to 5,600 nays—but it was defeated by city voters by a 2 to 1 margin. Prop. H, which limits the costs a landlord can pass along to tenants, won in Noe (7,200 for, 5,000 against) and also carried citywide.

The infamous Prop. K, Willie Brown's milktoast slow-growth measure, failed with our help: Noe voted no, 8,300 to 3,700. Efforts to pass Prop. L, the meat-ax anti-growth measure, were successful here in Noe Valley, where the vote was 6,715 for and 5,340 against. But in San Francisco as a whole, L went down to defeat by 500 votes, out of 275,000 cast.

☎☎☎

IN LOCAL POLITICS, the word is out that Bob Roddick is stepping down as president of the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association. According to Bob, the November vote has been postponed while the group puts together a slate of candidates for the job.

"Four years is enough," explains Bob. "We have brought this organization from the 32 active members we had four years ago to 130 at present, we are now active in the District Council of Merchants, we have established mechanisms to be notified of legislative changes that will affect our neighborhood, and we have established a liaison person to other neighborhood organizations."

One thing Bob wasn't able to do during his term was get the merchants to raise their annual dues to \$100. "We started at \$25 and have gotten it up to \$75, but that is as far as the merchants will go," laments Bob. "Looking at just one item in our budget, the new Christmas banners we purchased last year cost \$3,900, and then you have to add \$3,500 each year to put them up along 24th and now Church Street, take them down, and then store them until the next year."

As for the group's efforts to obtain diagonal parking on Castro Street from 24th to Clipper, Bob was quite terse: "That is unofficially dead." He noted that all the various plans for diagonal parking would require Muni to move the overhead wiring for its rabbit-eared buses. "They [Muni] came out and looked at the proposed plans between Jersey and Clipper and determined that they could not feasibly move the overhead wiring to accommodate the required lane changes for the electric buses, which is something they knew all along."

As for the NVMPA officers, Roddick predicts that the association will have a slate to propose for a vote of the membership "by spring."

☎☎☎

CHAKRA WAVES traveled across the city's yoga community last month when a large group of yoga teachers and students were locked out of Yoga Shala at 25th and Castro streets. The studio allegedly bolted its doors on Nov. 4, without notice to the 12 teachers and scores of students who regularly used the facility.

Owner John Robb told the *Chronicle* that he was on overload, trying to manage the studio as well as to teach. But the mantra from neighbors is that someone has expressed an interest in buying the business. At press time, there was still a sign on the front door saying the studio was "temporarily closed."

☎☎☎

SHORT SHIRTS: Forty Love, the tennis shop on 24th Street between Castro and Diamond, closed on Nov. 18. The owner reportedly hit it big on the Internet and is actively selling what he calls "The Trailer Trash Doll." Upon investigation of his web site, www.trailertrashdoll.com, you can see why: she's a Barbie gone bad. The two other "first edition" dolls offered through the site are called Drag Queen Blonde and Redhead—quite

elegant, compared to little Ms. Trash.

According to Grace Ann Walden in the Food section of the *Chron*, a tavern called Bliss Bar is set to open in the former home of the Rover's Inn at 4026 24th St. Walden writes that Bliss, owned by Jim Kopp, will serve "inventive cocktails," sake, wine, and beer, and an array of dim sum, while a deejay spins tunes. Meet you there after the inauguration.

Despite rumors to the contrary, the classy sushi bar Hamano Sushi at 1332 Castro is not closing. However, Mr. Hamano has reportedly sold the place.

The huge sale signs covering the front windows of Little Bean Sprouts have inspired rumors that the popular toddler supply station (on 24th across from Bell) is going to close. "Not true," says owner Lisa Thompson. "We have signed a five-year extension on our lease and plan to close the store briefly in the beginning of January for a remodel." They'll also be adding a line of artwork and scaled-down furniture.

Noe Valley drivers freaked out when the 24th Street public parking lot closed

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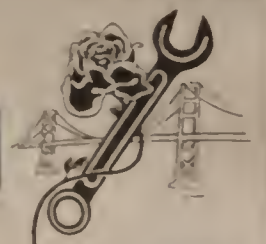
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RUMORS

Continued from Previous Page

last month without warning. Well, it has reopened with a new asphalt surface and new bulletin board. We need some neighborhood groups to get together and post a sign there, warning that all flyers will be removed on the full moon. Then we need to put together a team to actually do it.



TOPOF THE POPS: Streetlight Records reports that its best-selling CD is, far and away, P.J. Harvey's *Story from the City*. Streetlighter Laura Horsfall says that Polly Jean's recent release was much anticipated by her "huge cult following" around these parts. "Her music is fairly stripped-down rock with not too much theatrics." The focus is on the lyrics, she says.

Over at eclectic Aquarius Records (Valencia near 23rd), the man in charge, "just Jeff, please," reports that their numba-one seller is *The Conet Project*, which he describes as "a collection of short-wave recordings, consisting primarily of secret code transmissions [mostly] by the CIA and KGB, that have creepy recitations of numbers that sometimes sound like a simple melody." Just Jeff says that the compilation comes with a small booklet that provides some explanation, "but I really like just listening to it."

'Tis the season for violence, at least in the video stores. Noe Valley Video's Rafael Corral reports that the top demand is for *Gladiator*. Ditto, down at First Choice Video, as well as at the huge Blockbuster on Church near Market—and strangely enough, also at the more artsy Video Wave.

Warns Rafael, "We have 14 *Gladiator* tapes and they are always out, so the eas-

iest thing to do is to call in a reservation and we'll call you when a copy comes in."

To avoid the problem, Alexander Gardener at Vidco Wave suggests renting something else. *But I'm a Cheerleader* is, according to him, "a big treat."

For you bookworms out there, Mark Ezarik at Cover to Cover says his best-selling nonfiction is the biography *Joe DiMaggio*, by Richard Cramer. In the fiction department, the top spot belongs to *Blind Assassin*, the new one from Margaret Atwood. Now that the kids have finished the *Harry Potter* series, they're all reading *Olivia*, by Ian Falconer.

In the cheap food category, two Noe Valley eateries made the *Chronicle's* recent (Oct. 15) "Fab Food for the Frugal" list. Any guesses? Clue: They both serve Chinese cuisine. Try Alice's Restaurant on Sanchez and 29th, and Eric's on Church and 27th.

NOE VALLEY CHAMBER MUSIC opened its 2000-2001 season at the Noe Valley Ministry with a gala benefit attended by more than 100 patrons, which raised more than \$8,000 for this season.

Lyric soprano Kristin Clayton and pianist and conductor Peter Grunberg performed what they described as an "all-French concert," with lovely tunes by Bizet, Massenet, and Debussy. Stealing the show, however, was the brand new Hamburg Steinway grand piano. It was purchased with \$53,000 that had been contributed over the past year.

Concerts are held once a month, on Sundays at 4 p.m. The next one is scheduled for Dec. 3, when the Ferrara/Leisek Duo performs a guitar concert. Tickets are \$12 (\$8 for students and seniors).

THAT'S ALL, YOU ALL. Have a great holiday and Happy New Year! Is this the *real* start of the new millennium, finally...and does anybody care? We'll be seeing you next February. By then, we should know who the president is. □

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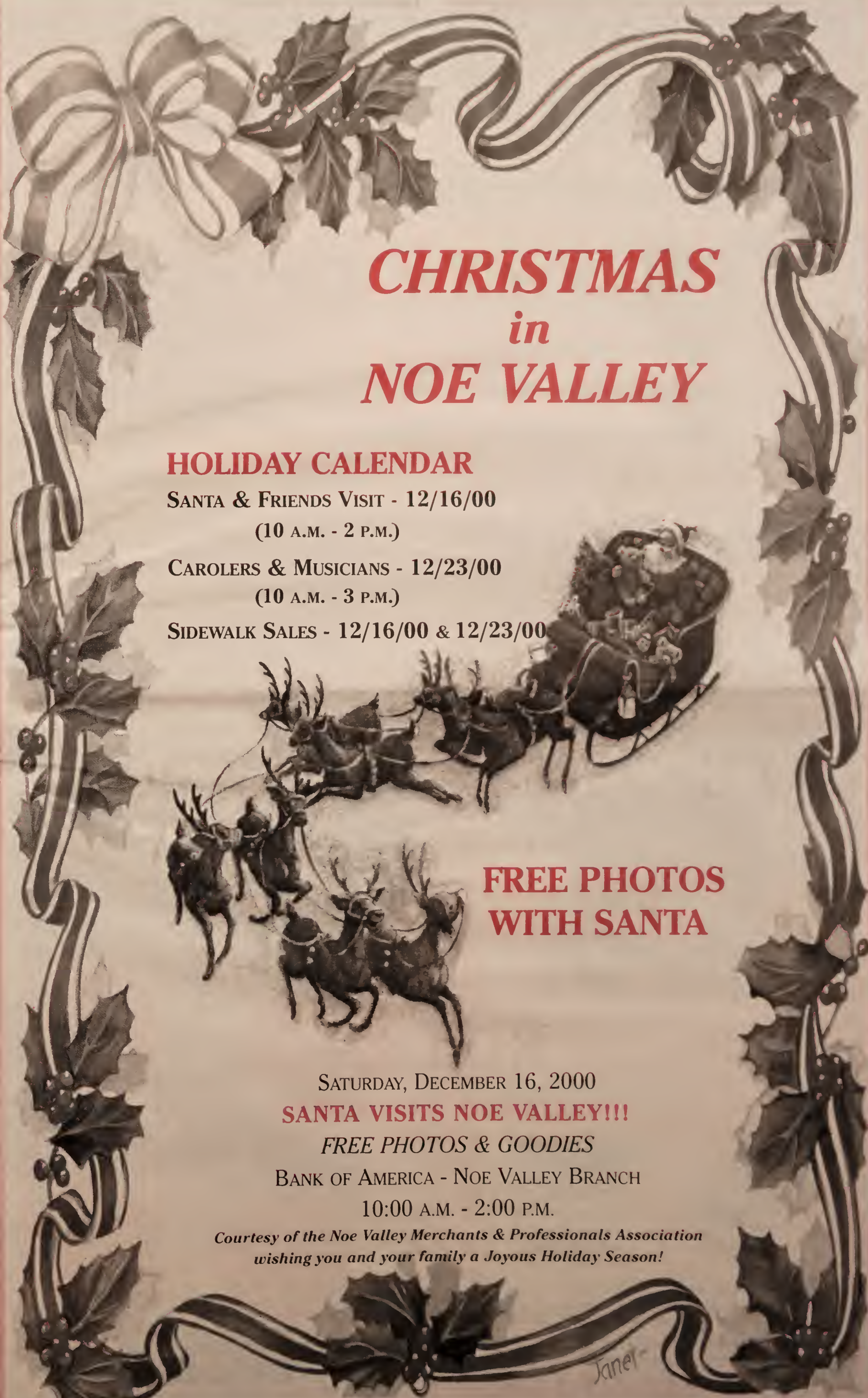
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HOLIDAY CALENDAR

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(10 A.M. - 2 P.M.)

CAROLERS & MUSICIANS - 12/23/00

(10 A.M. - 3 P.M.)

SIDEWALK SALES - 12/16/00 & 12/23/00



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*Happy Holidays from Tom, Mike
and the MikeyTom Market staff*



Photo courtesy of Pamela Gerard

Moments to Live a Lasting Time.

There's not much to being small. Every day's a feast to gnaw on. And if we're lucky, we have grown-up playmates to keep us from the dangers we don't know of yet.

Luckier still are those who've had someone to take and preserve snapshots of our first steps, cries and amazement. Looking at them now, even with the soft focus, may help remind us of how it felt—to be one with the joy of our growing. And to be mindful of that joy still—today.

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